IMAGERY IN THE HYMNS
OF CHARLES WESLEY

IMAGERY IN THE HYMNS OF CHARLES WESLEY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Charles Wesley's reputation as the greatest of the English hymn writers appears to be unassailable. Quite naturally Methodist admirers have waxed rhapsodical in his praise, but informed "outsiders" have also been eloquent in their tributes to his ability as a hymn writer. Bernard Manning, a Congregational layman, insists that Wesley's work "ranks in Christian literature with the Psalms, the Book of Common Prayer, the Canon of the Mass. In its own way it is perfect, unapproachable, elemental in its perfection. You cannot alter it except to mar it; it is a work of supreme devotional art by a religious genius."[1] Dr. Alexander Gordon, a cautious Unitarian, described Charles Wesley's hymns as enthusiastically as any Methodist: "Rich in melody, they invite to singing, and in the best of them there is a lyrical swing and an undertone of mystical fervour which both vitalize and mellow the substratum of doctrine."[2] And it was an Anglican, Dr. John Julian, outlining the hymnological contribution of the Wesley family for his monumental Dictionary of Hymnology, who placed the bardic wreath on his head: "But, after all, it was Charles Wesley who was the *great* hymn-writer of the Wesley family--perhaps taking quantity and quality into consideration, the great hymn-writer of all ages."[3]

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[1] The Hymns of Wesley and Watts: Five Informal Papers (London, 1942), p. 14.

[2] "Charles Wesley," Dictionary of National Biography, XX (London), 1212.

The importance of Charles Wesley in the history of English verse in general has been recognized by many eminent critics. Stopford Brooke pointed out in 1874 that hymns even of a quality far lower than the average compositions of Charles Wesley play an essential part both in the development of literary taste and in the shaping of literary achievement.[4] Edmund Gosse acknowledged that "the sacred songs of Charles Wesley . . . reach at their noblest the highest level of Protestant religious poetry in this country since George Herbert."[5] W. J. Courthope described him as "the most admirable devotional lyric poet in the English Language."[6] George Saintsbury treated Wesley as the leader of truly inspired writers of religious verse, who in the eighteenth century became "more positively poetical than most of the profane."[7] Oliver Elton placed Charles Wesley "at the head of all English hymnologists," and indicated that he "often attains to poetry, and is much oftener on the brink of it" by references to his "verbal music and easily rememberable sound," his "ringing vowels," and his ear for rhythm, which "often keeps the hymn going when the language flags."[8]

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[3] Dover Edition, II (New York, 1957), 1257.

[4] Theology in the English Poets (New York, 1910), p. 127.

[5] History of Eighteenth Century Literature (London, 1891), p. 230.

[6] History of English Poetry, V (London, 1905), p. 343.

[7] History of English Prosody, II (London, 1923), p. 501.

[8] Survey of English Literature, 1730-1780, II (London, 1928), pp. 224-226.

Despite this recognition, however, scholarship dealing with the poetical qualities of Charles Wesley's hymns is meagre. There is one doctoral dissertation entitled "The Theological and Literary Qualities of the Poetry of Charles Wesley in Relation to the Standards of His Age,"[9] but the study deals almost exclusively with the theological facets of Wesley's hymns. Martha Winburn England has produced a most readable book which relates the work of William Blake to the hymns of Charles Wesley.[10] The first essay compares Wesley's _Hymns for Children_ with Blake's _Songs_, the second traces the striking similarity between Wesley's _Hymns for the Nation_ and Blake's _Milton_, the third is an investigation of the mysticism of the two men, and the final section examines the dimensions of Wesley's _Short Hymns_ and Blake's _Jerusalem_. This is an excellent book, but it does not deal with the imagery of Charles Wesley directly. A third work which deals with Wesley's literary ability is Newton R. Flew's _The Hymns of Charles Wesley: A Study of Their Structure_.[11] Unlike most other writers on Charles Wesley, Flew practically ignores the theological aspects of the hymns, concentrating rather on their form. He does not, however, treat the imagery of the hymns.

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[9] See the unpublished dissertation (Cambridge, 1960), by James Dale.

[10] _Hymns Unbidden: Donne, Blake, Emily Dickenson, and the Hymnographers_ (New York, 1966).

[11] London, 1953.

Imagery studies, common enough on the seventeenth century religious poets, are rare in the field of hymnody. Lodwick Hartley[12] and Maurice J. Quinlan[13] have each written brief articles on Cowper's use of images, and there is one thesis by L. E. White entitled "The Imagery of the Hymns of Isaac Watts."[14] There is no study, to my knowledge, which deals with imagery in the hymns of Charles Wesley.

Charles Wesley is, I feel, a better poet than is generally known. Most people know him only through his hymns, and it is usually accepted that the hymn is a rather simple form of literary art. In my study I hope to show that the hymns of Charles Wesley employ the same poetic techniques which he used in his secular poetry, and that these techniques are often highly complex. The emphasis will be on the imagery, but not to the complete exclusion of other elements of his art.

There are two terms--"hymn" and "image"--which require stringent definitions when dealing with this subject.

The definition of a hymn, even for those scholars who agree that the hymn may rise to the level of true literature, is difficult. St. Augustine made one of the earliest attempts to define the hymn in his comment on the footnote which closes the second book of Psalms, "The prayers [according to the Septuagint, the 'hymns'] of David the son of Jesse are ended." This is his comment:

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[12] "The Worm and the Thorn: A Study of Cowper's Olney Hymns," Journal of Religion, XXIX (1949), p. 220-229.

[13] "Cowper's Imagery," JEGP, XLVII (1948), pp. 276-285.

[14] See the unpublished dissertation (Liverpool, 1963).

> Hymns are praises of God with singing, hymns are songs containing praises of God. If there be praise, and not praise of God, it is not a hymn. If there be praise, and praise of God, and it is not sung, it is not a hymn. It is necessary, therefore, if it be a hymn, that it have these three things: both praise, and praise of God, and that it be sung.

This simple definition has not been satisfactory to later students of the hymn. Arthur E. Gregory in his Hymn-Book of the Modern Church, comments on St. Augustine's definition:

> That the primary idea of a hymn is praise may also be granted, but even so 'praise' must be given an extensive connotation, that it may include whatever directly or indirectly glorifies God. St. Paul's exhortations show how much more than the offering of adoration is included in the province of Christian song. Our hymn-book, like the Hebrew Psalter, must have not only its songs of high thanksgiving, its sacrifice of praise, but also its prayer of the penitent as he poureth out his soul unto God, its sin-offering as well as its thanks-offering, its intercessions and meditations, its instructions and exhortations, its lighter songs and melodies.[15]

It is safe to say that most contemporary scholars tend to veer away from the rigid definition of St. Augustine, though they would begin as does Harvey Marks, "A hymn is an ode of praise to Almighty God," then open the door to other forms by adding "but in a broad sense it may include canticles, chants, carols, spirituals and gospel songs."[16]

Adam Fox would add another limitation to the hymn--simplicity--and he insists that hymns fall short of being poetry because of this limitation.

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[15] London, 1904, p. 8.

[16] The Rise and Growth of English Hymnody (New York, 1937), p. 29.

> But are hymns really works of art then? The answer is 'Yes' decidedly. But although they use the same material as the art of poetry, hymns are not poetry except by coincidence, and to say that a hymn is good or bad poetry is not to settle the question whether it is a good or a bad hymn. For so much depends on the tune, and so little depends on the superior excellence of the verse. The fancies in the sense and subtle variations in the metre which go so much to make good poetry are nothing but a hindrance in a hymn. The words should fit the tune, and while they are being sung, there is no time to stop and admire the fancy. Plain words, plain metre, plain sense are the first requirements. They may be solemn or they may be gay, but they must be something to elevate the singer.[17]

I disagree with practically every word of this, and much of my study will be devoted to proving that the hymn can be complex, that there can be subtle variations in the metre, and that many hymns are poetry not "by coincidence" but by art. Fox is one of the most respected scholars in the field of hymnody, but he is not alone in this error, for John Haynes Holmes also insists on simplicity as a characteristic of the hymn:

> A hymn must contain not the lightest suggestion of complexity, of either thought or expression. There must be no unusual words, no fanciful figures of speech, no elaboration of diction or of phrase. Those very devices of eloquence and beauty, which the poet commands as the composer commands the instrument of his orchestra, are here out of place. Simplicity is the word--simplicity which is the handmaid of clarity. A good hymn must be as clear on the first reading as the second, and as obvious in its essence to the child as to the adult.[18]

There may be those who agree with Fox and Holmes, but I hope to prove that Charles Wesley's hymns certainly do not fit into this definition. His hymns are anything but simple. It has been assumed that Charles Wesley suddenly became a poet at his conversion in 1738, that "Where Shall My Wond'ring Soul Begin?" was, in fact, practically his first venture in verse. Nothing could be farther from the truth. He was already a mature poet and had written hundreds of competent poems, mainly versifications of the classics in the manner of Dryden or Pope. He had a classical background and a Miltonic facility for incorporating polysyllabic Latinate words into the texture of his verse in such a manner that they illustrate his theme (a habit he carried over to his hymn-writing). He wrote in almost every stanza form known and employed over one hundred different metres.

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[17] English Hymns and Hymn Writers (London, 1948), p. 48.

[18] "What Makes a Good Hymn?" The Christian Century, June 10, 1942, p. 24.

There is one final limitation which at least one critic would impose on the hymn. Robert Guy McCutchan insists that hymns must be reverent. In the light of some of the terrible products spawned by hymn-writers (ancient and modern) this may have some validity. Many of the "hymns" produced in the eighteenth century were bad beyond belief and certainly anything but reverent. Consider the following "hymn" from a book entitled A General Selection of the Newest and Most Admired Hymns and Spiritual Songs Now in Use (Richmond, Virginia, 1807). The author, Steth Mean, entitled it "The Experience of a penitent O'Kellian Minister, Restored to Methodism."

> Among the smooth Moravians, my parents trained me up,
> I lived without religion, or grace, or faith, or hope.
> They told me Jesus suffer'd for sinners on the tree,
> And therefore be contented, you're safe eternally.
>
> They'd preach and sing, and fiddle, and feast, and sleep,
>   and dream,
> But all as soft and tender, as butter, oil, or cream;
> They'd cry out peace and safety, and told us all was well.
> While we were heedless rushing upon the verge of hell.

The Methodist were preaching like thunder all about,
At length I went amongst them, to hear them groan and shout;
I thought they were distracted, such fools I'd never seen,
They'd stamp and clap and tumble, and roar and cry and scream.

One Spencer was their preacher, whom Satan did distain,
Hell-fire and damnation he poured like showers of rain!
This rapid son of Thunder brought me to look around,
And lo! upon the borders of Hell myself I found.

I then applied to Jesus, my wounded soul he heal'd,
With shouts and songs of praises, my mouth he also filled;
This long despis'd confusion I now could freely join,
I told my former brethern, the Methodist are mine.[19]

While this may be a hymn by some loose definition of the term, not even the most devout Methodist would classify it as a good hymn. The eighteenth century had no monopoly on this sort of thing, of course, for one of the favorite "hymns" of the Grand Old Opera during the 1930's was entitled "They Ain't No Flies on My Jesus."

Fortunately, few of Charles Wesley's hymns are as dreadful as the one above, but there are many of his short compositions which are not hymns in any real sense. In my study I shall limit the term "hymn" by the following criteria, two having regard to its contents, and two to its form:

1. It is religious, an act of worship.

2. It is communal in its approach to religion, containing sentiments which may be shared by a group of people, even though they may all be expected to sing "I" instead of "we."

3. It is lyrical, written to be sung, not chanted or intoned.

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[19] Quoted in Robert Guy McCutchan's Hymns in the Lives of Men (New York, 1955), p. 29.

4. It is comparatively regular both in metre and in structure.

In this study I will deal only with those works which appeared in congregational hymn books, not with the hundreds of short verses which Wesley composed for special occasions. I shall include hymns of praise, but I shall also include hymns which take another form, including canticles, chants, and carols. Many of the hymns which I shall use are "occasional" in the sense that they are not primarily songs of praise, but written for other purposes (funeral hymns, intercession hymns, etc.).

If the term "hymn" presents some difficulty, there is another and more pressing problem; the term "image" is an obstacle to every student of imagery. "An image is a word or group of words that make an appeal to one of the senses."[20] "A concrete detail that appeals to any of the reader's senses is called an IMAGE."[21] Every handbook contains a definition much like these two--and most of the definitions are too vague, too general to be of much use. Robert Frost makes the most straightforward statement:

> There are many things I have found myself saying about poetry, but the chiefest of these is that it is metaphor, saying one thing and meaning another, the pleasure of ulteriority. Poetry is simply made of metaphor. So is philosophy--and science, if it will take a soft impeachment from a friend. Every poem is a new metaphor inside or it is nothing. And there is a sense in which all poems are the same old metaphor.[22]

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[20] Porter G. Perrin, Writers' Guide and Index to English, 3rd ed. (Chicago, 1959), p. 561.

[21] C. F. Mann and Peter J. Seng, Poems: Wadsworth Handbook and Anthology (Belmont, Calif., 1961), p. 54.

[22] "The Constant Symbol," The Poetry of Robert Frost (New York, 1946), p. xvi.

In other words, tell the truth--but tell it slant. Metaphor is undoubtedly the most important of the tropes employed by Wesley, though examples of others constantly recur. For instance, there is the antonomasis of "Come all ye Magdalens in lust,"[23] where a proper noun is used as a general epithet; there is the synecdoche of "The mournful, broken Hearts rejoice"(I, 229), where a part is used instead of the whole; and there is the somewhat annoying metonymy of speaking about "the stony" instead of "the Stony Heart" (V, 63). In essence, these are all metaphor, but in my study I shall identify similies, personifications, analogies, as well as the more unusual figures of speech, such as the oxymoron. In addition to the various figures of speech that are primarily metaphoric in nature, I shall examine to some degree those words and phrases which are not comparative, but which appeal to one of the five senses--"the fiery hour" or "Thro' those dazling Worlds above," for example.

There are three basic limitations in my study. First, I shall make no attempt to comment on the tunes of the hymns. Second, except for one brief chapter, I shall make no detailed study of Charles Wesley's poetic techniques other than imagery. Third, I shall limit the study to 300 hymns. Of this number, I have chosen twenty-five which have proved most enduring, and which are still being printed in hymn books--hymns such as "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing." The remaining 275 hymns which I shall use as a basis for statistical tabulation are selected from those works of Charles Wesley which appeared in hymn books that were used for congregational singing. This will exclude over 5,000 short pieces which he called "Sacred Poems" which were rarely used for congregational singing. I shall also exclude over 2,000 compositions which Wesley left in manuscript, but have never been published. Finally, I have excluded those compositions of his which are secular in tone, such as his satire "The Man of Fashion." It appears, then, that by using only those hymns which were actually used for congregation singing, Wesley's output of hymns can be placed at somewhere very close to the figure of 1,500. In Appendix E I have listed the publications of Wesley in which these appeared and my sampling will include hymns from all of these works. I have included in my sample every fifth hymn, for it seems that a sampling of twenty percent of a poet's output will be adequate for the purpose. This is especially true of Wesley, for he wrote his hymn books in many cases, according to subject. From his Funeral Hymns, for example, I have included six out of the thirty compositions, and this principal of selection provides not only his best work, but that which is average or even poor. What the selection provides then, is one-fifth of Charles Wesley's hymns including almost all of his metrical forms and all of his major themes.

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[23] The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley, ed. G. Osborn, (London, 1868-1872), I, 191. Subsequent citations of this work will be placed in the text. Volume numbers will be indicated by capital Roman numerals, while the page numbers will be indicated by small Arabic numerals.

The final problem is the question of what to do with the images in an author's work once they are counted and neatly tabulated. The most popular approach has been to classify them according to the area of life from which they are drawn. Caroline F. E. Spurgeon's Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us[24] was the first work to employ this method, but there have been hosts of imitators. Lillian H. Hornstein has written an article which warns of the "obvious dangers inherent in a method which not only psychoanalyzes the creator, but reconstructs his physical environment on the basis of the frequency of metaphors."[25] Despite this stringent criticism and the stinging satire in her article, Mrs. Hornstein is not an opponent of imagery studies; she begins her article by indicating in glowing terms their worth:

> That the study of imagery has some usefulness may be admitted--a study which would include not only themes and subjects, but also structure and dramatic significance. Such an investigation as an adjunct to literary criticism can illuminate the text by deepening our understanding of the author, and may throw into relief the techniques and span of imaginative interests of the artist; a collection of images may indicate linguistic patterns and the thoughts inspired by purely verbal associations. Where the range of images and the nature of the craftsmanship can be established, isolated, and limited from the known work of the author, the investigation may prove a valuable adjunct to textual criticism and help in determining the canon. (p. 638)

The rest of her article discusses the dangers which imagery studies must overcome.

I have mentioned the difficulty of defining the image, but John Middleton Murry insists that it is not the identification of an image that is important. It is his position that any figure of speech may be an image, but he insists that the function of the image is what really matters: "In poetry metaphor is chiefly a means to excite in us a vague and heightened awareness of qualities we can best call spiritual."[26] I shall attempt to show in my study that the imagery of Charles Wesley serves exactly this purpose--to make man aware of spiritual qualities. The basis of his hymns is metaphysical, and, as Murry puts it, "imagery can be described as the analogy by which the human mind explores the universe of quality and charts the non-measurable world" (p. 9).

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[24] Cambridge, Mass., 1958.

[25] "Analysis of Imagery: A Critique of Literary Method," PMLA, LVII (Sept., 1942), p. 638.

It should be pointed out, however, that imagery in a hymn (especially Charles Wesley's hymns) may operate quite differently from imagery in other types of poetry. Originality is the goal in most poetry, and the image should point out the similarity between dissimilars in such a way that the reader is struck forceably by a new thought. As Murry puts it in *Countries of the Mind*: "What we primarily demand is that the similarity should be a true similarity, and that it should have lain hitherto unperceived, or but rarely perceived by us, so that it comes to use with an effect of revelation: something hitherto unknown is suddenly made known" (p. 4). This sudden revelation which most poets prize is, however, not the most important thing to a writer of hymns, or at least not to one who sees the function of a hymn in the manner as either John or Charles Wesley saw it. A study of Charles Wesley's hymns must take into account that the hymn was more than poetry; it was also a powerful weapon which could be used to teach men the moral lessons they needed to know. They were, to some degree, sermons:

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[26] *Countries of the Mind*, Second Series (London, 1931), p. 4.

> Charles Wesley's hymns can be analyzed; they have a coherent and intelligible structure of thought, and this habit of orderly composition is due to his desire to teach Christian doctrine to ordinary people. Their counterpart in prose would be orderly sermons with divisions clearly marked, as contrasted with sermons destitute of divisions.[27]

This determination to make of the hymns a means of instruction is seen not only in structure but in Wesley's use of imagery. Whereas the poet strives for the striking image that will bring a sudden shock of perception to the reader, Wesley, in his use of images, chose to rely on the image that would by constant repetition impress a doctrine on the mind of the singer. "There is no time," as Fox points out, "to stop and admire the fancy"[28]; therefore, the dedicated hymn writer must seek an image that is easily perceived and more readily understood by a congregation that is almost certain to include those who are untrained in the subtleties of poetry. What this actually means is that the imagery of Wesley consists by necessity of what many would call "stock images," for he did not seek originality so much as he sought what one might call a "functional image." By this I mean an image that fits the definition given above--one that is easy to recognize, simple to understand, and preferably easy to memorize. It should, perhaps, strike the reader or the singer with force the first time it is encountered, but even more important it should convey to the unlettered farmer a truth about religion which would stay in his mind after the service. This function of the hymn is recognized by most hymnologists, and it is central to an understanding of any facet of the genre. As Louis F. Benson puts it: "The hymns were a part of John Wesley's scheme of education. Behind the long succession of books was the single purpose of elevating the humble minds of his followers by the inspirations of poetry, and the unfailing conviction that in his brother's hymns he found the medium."[29]

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[27] The Hymns of Charles Wesley: A Study of Their Structure, p. 18.

[28] English Hymns and Hymn Writers, p. 48.

One of the purposes of this study is to prove that the poet and the preacher met in Charles Wesley, and that his imagery (which on the whole is from the Bible and not original) very often reflects the true poetic spirit. This combination of poetic genius and didactic purpose is often at war with itself, so that at times the hymns of Wesley are nothing but capsule versions of sermons, but at his best Wesley reveals the poetic gift in choosing images that are original and striking. In his biography of Charles Wesley, Luke Wiseman draws attention to this harnessing of poetic power to the demands of the Methodist Movement:

> . . . to him it was granted by means of his extraordinary lyrical genius to express the adoration, lead the devout, inform the mind, enlarge the understanding, quicken the imagination, purify the affection, guide the aspiration, build up the faith, enrich the zeal, unify the spirit of Methodists, not only of his own time but of future generations. If one wants to discover or to receive the essential spirit of Methodism or to do its characteristic work, one turns for inspiration not to John Wesley's Sermons or to his Notes on the New Testament. Not to the Rules of the Society, nor even to usages of the church called by his name, but to Charles Wesley's hymns.[30]

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[29] The Hymnody of the Christian Church (New York, 1927), p. 112.

[30] Charles Wesley, Evangelist and Poet (New York, 1932), p. 15.

I have stressed this functional use of the image in Charles Wesley's hymns, for the difficulty which Mrs. Hornstein warns of (identifying the image) is not so difficult as recognizing the purpose Wesley attempts to achieve in his hymns.

Another danger of which Mrs. Hornstein warns is the possibility that the writer may overemphasize the importance of certain images or he may place a lesser value on some images than the writer intended. We may think a certain line of great significance, but the real question is, "What did the author think of it?" When even living authors are unable to comment on their own work at times, how can the literary psychoanalyst do it? One thinks of Robert Browning's reply to Elizabeth Barrett when she asked the meaning of one of his lines written long before. Browning stared at the line intently, then said, "Once God and Robert Browning knew what that means. Now only God knows what it means." The simple way of getting around this problem is to take the line of John Erskine, who says, "The reason men have said that great artists are inspired, is that great artists create more than they know--meanings they have not heard of, beauty they have not seen."[31] No doubt there is truth in this statement, but to base a study on a writer's unconscious seems to me to be a most dangerous procedure. It is necessary, I think, to accept the fact that no reader can ever know all that a writer meant, and that "even with one author and one critic, the psychological interpretation of circumstances when the word represents an image is one not only of philological and historical semantics, but of verbal associations, which may have been completely 'unimaginative' for the author but ring with overtones for the critic."[32]

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[31] The Delight of Great Books (Indianapolis, 1928), pp. 23-24.

Another temptation which the student of images must avoid is over-emphasis on the area of life from which images are drawn as a key to the writer's personality. It is this tendency in Caroline Spurgeon's work which Mrs. Hornstein dislikes, and her criticism, I believe, is valid. Spurgeon insists, for example that "evil in Shakespeare's imagination is dirty, black, and foul, a blot, a spot, a stain,"[33] and that this imagery represents a judgment on Shakespeare's character. She insists that since there are multiple images of rivers at floodtide Shakespeare must have seen such sights. It is but one step from this type of thinking to the policy of using negative evidence; in other words, if an image from a particular sphere of experience does not appear in a writer's work, he did not have first hand knowledge of the matter. This assumption of biographical relationship of images to life within a writer's work is certainly dangerous and is, no doubt, a habit which many critics abuse; however, in my study I shall point out the relationship between the writer's life and his work whenever there is documented proof of such relationships. Such proof is often not difficult to find, for Wesley allowed his experience in everyday life to slip into his hymns quite often. He wrote Hymns for the Nation when defeat for the British forces seemed inevitable, and the hymns in this volume abound with images referring to rebellion. This is legitimate territory for an imagery study, and I shall point out such relationships when proof is available.

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[32] Hornstein, p. 640.

[33] Shakespeare's Imagery, p. 158.

The identification and classification of images is not the most difficult task of the student of imagery, as I have pointed out. Statistical tabulation of images is based, of course, on the number of times an image appears in a given body of work, and it is evident that this method is of limited value. The obvious failure of such a procedure to reveal the importance of the individual image outweighs the possibility that sheer weight of numbers may often reveal a pattern in the writer's work. Most imagery studies do not rely completely on percentile tabulations; there are attempts to discuss patterns as such and to interpret the tables. In view of the fact that Wesley's hymns are didactic instruments, the number of times an image appears is often of major significance, and I have used the tables as an attempt to estimate the functional aspect of the images.

In Appendix A I have listed by first line those hymns which are used as a basis for my study and have indicated the location of each hymn. Appendices B, C, and D contain statistical information on Wesley's images--types of images, referents of images, and subject-matter categories. Appendix E is a complete, chronological list of Charles Wesley's publications, and Appendix F lists his favorite metres.

Chapter Two is a brief study of the background of Wesley's hymns--political, social, and religious.

Chapter Three is a discussion of the literary techniques of Charles Wesley other than his imagery--diction, metre, rhyme, and repetition.

In Chapter Four, I have broken down into formal categories the types of images which Wesley used most frequently. Also included in this chapter are structures which are not images in the strictest sense, but which function as such through appeal to one of the senses. Wesley used several structural devices which are not single images, but which are so vital to an understanding of his method that I have included a discussion of them. In each case I have indicated the number of times each device or image is used, and I have attempted to relate the type of imagery to specific qualities in his hymns.

Chapter Five is an analysis of the referents of Wesley's hymns. Obviously hymns are limited by their religious nature, and almost without exception Wesley uses his images to refer to some aspect of religion. The four major referents are the nature of God, the nature of man, the conversion experience, and the doctrines which apply to believers. In each of these areas I have attempted to indicate the relation of Wesley's imagery with the area to which it refers.

Although I feel that it is dangerous to use the area from which images are drawn to any great extent, I have included in Chapter Six an analysis of this particular aspect of Wesley's images. Whenever positive proof exists, I have discussed the source of particular images; however, I have been very careful to avoid either "positive" or "negative" conclusions where no documented evidence exists.

Chapter Seven is a discussion of the influence which the metaphysical poets and the Bible exerted on the imagery of Wesley. His imagery is compared with that of Isaac Watts and William Cowper.

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF CHARLES WESLEY'S HYMNS

No art can escape the influences of the age in which it is created. Let the artist flee to the highest possible ivory tower, still his work will reflect to some degree the institutions, movements, and manners of the world outside. In the case of Charles Wesley, we find a man who had no intention of avoiding the world; indeed, he felt that the world was his parish, and his long life was invested and centered in the arena of eighteenth-century culture. It was a busy and active arena, for the eighteenth century was a watershed in English history. Many of the fundamental ideas which have determined the character of our modern world either originated or received new emphasis during this period, and Charles Wesley was keenly aware of the quickening tempo of his age.

Although the focus of this study is not primarily on historical criticism, some of the forces which molded Wesley's hymns should be considered. A complete discussion of all the historical forces which influenced Charles Wesley's hymns is, of course, impossible in this brief chapter, but there are five facets of the age which are particularly significant: the philosophical climate, the state of the Church of England, the Methodist Revival, the cult of sensibility, and the literary background.

Philosophy during the eighteenth century was in a state of flux. To replace the Christian belief that was steadily waning among the upper classes during the Enlightenment, Newtonian science gave to humanity a new faith in the mind of man and in the perfection of God as the all-wise designer of a harmonious universe. Science, still in its infancy, as yet entertained no doubts as to the universal validity of its conclusion; it had not yet had time to reform the world--and fail in the reformation. In the year in which Newton published his Principia, the scientist had the world before him where to choose, and Providence was still his guide. Nature was not the field of an irrational conflict; it was the beautifully coordinated handiwork of the Great Designer, a harmonious whole in which the earth, man's dwelling place, was still the most important creation. During the second half of the seventeenth century, new discoveries revealing the nature of the universe had become available, and the task of interpreting the new science had been undertaken by two prominent Latitudinarians: Thomas Sprat, Bishop of Rochester, and Joseph Glanvill, Rector of Bath. Both insisted that science and theology differ in method (though not in results) and must be kept apart. Newton thought otherwise; he insisted that faith and knowledge are closely related and that they illuminate each other so profoundly that their relationship can never be too close. This attitude, G. R. Gregg maintains, was not only held by Newton but by other scientists as well.

> The brilliant advances of the new science were achieved by men of deep religious conviction. Both Boyle and Newton wrote extensively on theological subjects. . . . They believed that the natural universe, being the handiwork of God, clearly indicates its creator's existence and suggests his character. Wherever you look in nature you find order and beauty, and the scientists regarded this as one of the most cogent proofs of

> God's existence. Newton argued from the law which governed the stars in their courses, John Ray from the evidence he found in the structure of plants and animals.[1]

It was, therefore, still possible for Deistic poets such as Thomson to regard the music of the spheres as hymned by angels for the ears of men who were the highest manifestations of physical life in the universe, for as Herbert Read expresses it: "It was felt that reason was autonomous, and that the conception of the world, discovered by reason, was not merely relative, but real. To most men it seemed that reason was a sufficient guide to happiness and that a progressive revelation of the immutable laws of cause and effect would give to a man a greater and greater rational control over his physical environment."[2]

It is true that to the advanced thinkers of the age God was no longer an ever-present Providence concerned with the rescue of virgins and the discovery of hidden crimes. He had become the Great First Cause, who, in His infinite wisdom, had fashioned a universe moving beautifully by scientific law, moving so perfectly that there could be no cause for future interference on the part of the Creator, and yet moving throughout the centuries according to His purpose and design. The glad acceptance of this scientifically controlled universe may be seen in poem after poem during the early part of the period. Dryden sang in "A Song for St. Cecilia's Day":

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[1] The Church and the Age of Reason 1648-1789, The Pelican History of the Church, IV (Bristol, 1966), p. 74.

[2] Reason and Romanticism (London, 1926), pp. 6-7.

From harmony, from heav'nly harmony
  This universal frame began;
  From harmony to harmony
Thro' all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in man.

Pope showed his faith in reason in An Essay on Man:

> Go, wondrous creature! mount where science guides!
> Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides;
> Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
> Correct old Time and regulate the sun! (II, 19-22)

The major and minor poets of the day all found the prevailing system good, but the Great Designer behind it all was a rather nebulous figure.[3]

The hymns of Charles Wesley are a reaction against the distant and rather uninterested deity of Shaftsbury and Pope. As the following lines reveal, Wesley felt that the relationship between God and man must be intensely personal:

  Thee, O my GOD and King,
  My Father, Thee I sing!
Hear well-pleas'd the joyous Sound,
  Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
Lost, I now in CHRIST am found,
  Dead, by Faith in CHRIST I live.

  Father, behold thy Son,
  In CHRIST I am thy own.
Stranger long to Thee and Rest,
  See the Prodigal is come:
Open wide thine Arms and Breast,
  Take the weary Wand'rer home.

  Thine Eye observ'd from far,
  Thy Pity look'd me near:
Me thy Bowels yearn'd to see,
  Me thy Mercy ran to find,

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[3] For a more detailed discussion of this idea see C. A. Moore, "Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets," PMLA, XXXI (1916), 264-365.

Empty, poor, and void of Thee,
  Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind.

  Thou on my Neck didst fall,
  Thy Kiss forgave me all:
Still the gracious Words I hear,
  Words that made the Savior mine,
Haste, for Him the Robe prepare,
  His be Righteousness Divine!

  Thee then, my GOD and King,
  My Father, Thee I sing!
Hear well-pleas'd the joyous Sound,
  Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
Lost I now in CHRIST am found,
  Dead, by Faith in CHRIST I live.   (I, 96-97)

A God whose "Bowels yearn'd to see" would have been an embarrassing thought to the men of the Age of Reason, and I shall discuss in Chapter Five this shift in emphasis on the nature of God as it is reflected in the imagery of Wesley's hymns.

Any discussion of eighteenth-century philosophy must, sooner or later, deal with the phrase "the best of all possible worlds." This phrase is derived from the metaphysical conceptions of Leibnitz and Wolff in Germany, and Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke in England lent their support to the more general trust in the new science. Space will permit only the simplest explanation of the logical processes by which the rationalists convinced themselves that this is the best of all possible worlds. Among the universal systems conceivable by the mind of God, there must have been a difference in degree of perfection. God chose to bring only one of these potential systems into being. As God possessed perfect wisdom served by perfect will, He was compelled by the necessity of His own being to create the best of them all. Infinite wisdom and power would be incompatible with error; hence the universe, perfectly designed in the beginning, has functioned since without repair.[4] Samuel Johnson found that the universe revealed the goodness of God and argued that God had proportioned his gifts to man's real needs. Mark Akenside in Pleasures of the Imagination (II, 123-126, 322, 332-337) contemplated the universe and found:

> Through all its fabric, wisdom's artful aim
> Disposing every part, and gaining still
> By means proportion'd her benignant end.
>
> . . . .
>
> One order, all-involving and entire.
>
> . . . .
>
> The best and fairest of unnumber'd worlds
> That lay from everlasting in the store
> Of his divine conceptions.

Pope, of course, hymns the new faith vigorously in his Essay on Man:

> Of systems possible, if 'tis confest
> That wisdom infinite must form the best,
> Where all must full or not coherent be,
> And all that rises, rise in due degree,
> Then in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
> There must be somewhere, such a rank as Man . . .
> (I, 43-48)

This quotation introduces two closely related ideas which were highly significant to the eighteenth century--the doctrines of plenitude and the scale of being--which came to form an integral part of the conception of the best of all possible worlds. Evil was not caused by man's perversity or by a Satanic power, but by philosophical necessity. God could not be good without desiring to impart Himself, to embody Himself forth in created beings. He could not create another perfect being (for the idea of two coexistent perfect beings is contradictory to the eighteenth-century mind), but creation, even of imperfection, was preferable to nonentity. The idea of plenitude was derived from this assumption of the value of existence, to which each idea in the mind of God had a right, unless its creation was hindered by the laws of contradiction. If the claim to full creation were denied, the universe would be incomplete and irrational; hence, it would be evil as a whole. The fulfillment of the idea of plenitude gave an unbroken series of minutely differentiated created things in the Chain of Being. Each had the limitations of its class and could not escape from it, though it might strive for perfection within the class. The limitations of each class explained evil, moral and physical. Even the general limits of the system--crowding, competition, and death--were considered by the ingenious thinkers of the eighteenth century to be better than nonexistence.[5] Joseph Addison gave clear expression to this doctrine in the *Spectator*, No. 519:

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[4] For an extended discussion of this thought see A. O. Lovejoy, "Optimism and Romanticism," PMLA, XLII (1927), 921-945.

> Infinite goodness is of so communicative a nature, that it seems to delight in the conferring of existence upon every degree of perceptive being. The scale of being contains creatures who almost reach every step above. All matter swarms with life. Had he only made one species of animals, none of the rest would have enjoyed the happiness of existence: he had, therefore, specified in his creation every degree of life, every capacity of being.

Doctor Johnson's dissent from this specious optimism is well known.

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[5] The most complete treatment of this doctrine is found in A. O. Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936).

In a review of Soame Jenyns's Origin of Evil, Johnson disposed of the Chain of Being by arguing that the highest being that was not infinite must be at an infinite distance below infinity, and that each vacuity in the scale, no matter how small, could conceivably be filled. The scale failed to link man to God, and it did not permit a logical end to the process of creation. Johnson's rational attack was a fair answer to what was no more than an ingenious rationalization of the problem of evil.

In view of the fact that Charles Wesley's hymns are primarily concerned with the problem of evil and with the nature of man, it is essential to have a clear understanding of this idea of the Scale of Being which placed man in the scale between beast and angel. Man is, according to the doctrine, the highest of physical beings, and he lived in the best of all possible worlds which contained evil for the particular species and for the individual, but this "partial evil" was "Universal good" as Pope insists in Essay on Man:

> All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction, which thou canst not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:
> And spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.
> (I, 289-294)

Great ingenuity was exerted to reveal the compensations for all apparent evils. Between Shaftesbury and Malthus, who justified war, vice, and pestilence as a part of God's beneficent plan to keep population within the means of subsistence, Akenside[6] and

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[6] Pleasures of the Imagination, II, 705-711.

Addison[7] made conspicuous attempts to convince the public of the perfection of God's world.

Charles Wesley lived during a period when the Great Chain of Being and plenitude were still accepted by many as the answer to the human problem, and his hymns contain some elements which may be identified with this school of philosophy. For example, Wesley calmly accepted the fact that socially there existed a chain of being, for in the hymn entitled "For Masters" we read:

> Inferiors, as a sacred trust,
>   I from the Sovereign Lord receive,
> That what is suitable and just,
>   Impartial I to all may give:
>
> O'erlook them with a guardian eye;
>   From vice and wickedness restrain;
> Mistakes and lesser faults pass by,
>   And govern with a looser rein.
>
> The servant faithfully discreet,
>   Gentle to him, and good, and mild,
> Him would I tenderly entreat,
>   And scarce distinguish from a child.
>
> Yet let me not my place forsake,
>   The occasion of his stumbling prove,
> The servant to my bosom take,
>   Or mar him by familiar love.
>
> (VI, 121-122)

This is all very humane, no doubt, but it conflicts with the hundreds of hymns which Wesley wrote in which all believers are completely equal. Wesley was, however, a practical man, and evidently there was no doubt in his mind that his servant had one place in a chain of being when he served in the capacity of an employee and a completely different one when he entered a congregation. As for evil, once again we find that it is personal, and I shall point out in Chapter Five how Wesley's imagery reveals his thinking on the nature of this doctrine.

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[7] Spectator, Nos. 69, 115, 120, 121.

No discussion of the philosophy of the eighteenth century would be complete without some mention of the man who most influenced its thought. John Locke epitomized the intellectual outlook of his own age and shaped that of the next. For over a century he dominated European thought. The new Lockian psychology eliminated original sin and provided another ground for optimism. Man's mind was an unspotted tablet at birth on which experience wrote its messages of good and evil. Education was all--heredity nothing. The proper education of a single generation could conceivably transform the world. Time was to reveal that this belief was a bitter fallacy, but it took two centuries of "enlightened" educational experiment and attempted social reform to dash the high hopes of classical psychology.

The older view of man's corrupt nature was retained, however, by more conservative thinkers and more realistic analysts of human nature. The great French moralists Pascal and Bayle painted dark pictures of man's instincts. Locke himself considered man's appetites dangerous unless controlled by the prospect of rewards and punishments. Shaftesbury felt that a cultured gentleman could trust his "moral sense," but conceded that the ignorant must be kept in order by the church. Mandeville erected his ethical, and Adam Smith's ~~his~~ economic theory on the conviction that the selfishness of the individual would effect the good of the community. To Bolingbroke, Shaftsbury's instinctive moral sense was nonsense, and Swift scathingly pictured humanity as a "pernicious race of little odious vermin."[8] Charles Wesley's view of human nature is, of course, of this school, for as his imagery reveals, man is definitely a worm.

Locke's view of the mind of man at birth can be reconciled with two of the opinions concerning the nature of man prominent during the century: with the realistic view that man is a compound of good and evil, for good and evil may be largely the product of education; and with the Romantic view of man's fundamental goodness and benevolence, provided all the evil is laid to the charge of an educational system and an environment that have not yet been brought to perfection. To most thinkers of the age, unblinded by sentiment, man was a rather unruly beast to be disciplined and tamed. The idea that nature is opposed to grace had been too deeply imbedded in the consciousness of humanity by centuries of Christianity to be easily cast aside, though in the eighteenth century the opposition was generally expressed as one between appetite and reason.

The philosophy of the eighteenth century cannot be easily capsuled, but it is characterized to a great extent by the struggle to reconcile reason and theology. Dryden, however, at the beginning of the period said in the Preface to Religio Laici that "they who would prove religion by reason do but weaken the cause they endeavor to support." William Law in A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life called attention to the parting of the ways between reason and revelation. If reason could not swallow the miracles, either reason or religion must be abandoned.

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[8] Gulliver's Travels, A Tale of a Tub, Battle of the Books, ed. W. A. Eddy, Oxford Standard Edition (New York, 1933), pp. 153-154.

It is at this point philosophically that we find the hymns of Charles Wesley. In his hymns men know God not by reason but by the Christian method:

> Come, Holy Ghost, our Hearts inspire,
>   Let us Thy Influence prove;
> Source of the old Prophetick Fire,
>   Fountain of Life, and Love.
>
> God thro' Himself we then shall know,
>   If Thou within us shine,
> And sound, with all Thy Saints below,
>   The Depths of Love Divine.
>
> (I, 238-239)

"The old Prophetick Fire" that was to shine within (exactly what the philosophy of the eighteenth century as a whole had been attempting to replace by science and education) was the key to much of Wesley's approach to the hymn. In the body of my thesis I hope to call attention whenever possible to Wesley's imagery as it reflects the influence of the philosophy of his day, but it is obvious that his concepts were reactions against much of it rather than affirmations of it.

A second strong influence on Charles Wesley's hymns was the state of the Church of England during the Hanoverian age. Posterity has chiefly remembered the faults rather than the merits of the Church during this period, perhaps for good reason. The spirit of the age produced sterility within the Church of England, and the spirit of the age was unadventurous. For a century and a half English life had been embroiled in ceaseless controversy. The prevailing exhaustion demanded an interval of peace, and the eighteenth century provided it. The Hanoverian age was content with an unheroic temper. Its predominant interests were commercial; its most serious crisis was caused by speculation stocks; its main disputes concerned currency and excise; its chief victories were the conquests of new markets. Its rulers were opportunists, adept at manipulation and intrigue, and with standards usually adaptable and often low. As James Bates sums it up: "Though England prospered, the counterpart of material gain was spiritual loss. The task of the Church was gravely complicated by prevailing standards, and any fair judgment must make allowance for this fact."[9]

The most debilitating influence on the Hanoverian church was its entanglement in the partisan politics of the period. The danger of this is evident when one considers that the spirit of the new age was most clearly exemplified by its leading politician, Sir Robert Walpole, who usually subordinated his personal convictions to political necessities. It was under Walpole that the church came to be regarded as the ecclesiastical arm of the Whig administration, for as Peter Gay indicates, "the net around the Anglican Church was drawn still tighter by the Hanoverians, who, guided by supple politicians, used the Anglican Church as a reliable political adjunct."[10] It may be that such a union was inevitable. The Anglican church had been deprived of most of its power after the Restoration, even over its own affairs. As early as 1664 the House of Commons had abrogated the all-important privilege of taxing the clergy. Parliament took control over all new canons, and the courts assumed the traditional right of Convocation to censor heterodox writings.

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[9] _Materialism in the English Church_ (New York, 1959), p. 113.

[10] _The Enlightenment: An Interpretation_ (New York, 1967), p. 343.

The easiest road for the Church of England was to become part of the Establishment--and that is exactly what it did. During the seventeenth century the church had been the issue on which men were divided; during the eighteenth century it became the prize for which politicians contended.

In 1733 the bishops, who formed an important element in the House of Lords, were influential in saving Walpole from defeat, and no politician (certainly not Walpole!) could overlook so striking a lesson. The appointment of bishops was one of the few ways in which the balance of power could be affected, and it became a matter of prime concern to select men of proven party loyalty. In making appointments, political considerations outweighed all others. The results on preaching were inevitable.

> Preaching at its best was intellectual, classical, dry; it consisted of moral essays, appealing only to prudential motives. Preaching at its worst can only be imagined! . . . Emotions were taboo; resistance to vice and evangelical concern were conspicuously absent; and yet the pulpit as a molder of public thought was of even greater importance in that day than it is now, since the general press as we know it was not yet developed.[11]

Sir William Blackstone, the great jurist, went to hear every clergyman of note in London out of curiosity. He insisted that he "did not hear a single discourse which had more Christianity in it than the writings of Cicero"; and it would have been impossible for him to discover from what he heard "whether the preacher were a follower of Confucius or Mohammed, or of Christ."[12]

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[11] Charles Wesley Flint, Charles Wesley and His Colleagues (Washington, D.C., 1957), p. 4. Subsequent references to this work will be placed in the text.

The clergymen were forced to choose their friends with care, for to hitch your wagon to a falling star was fatal. Even a scholar of towering reputation, like William Warburton, could not gain a promotion without the aid of powerful sponsors. Such a system made churchmen party hacks. Some, indeed, resented the position in which they were placed, but were constrained to remain silent, for the clerical profession was over-crowded, and indifference to advancement spelled poverty. The clergy, therefore, courted the great and lived in patient hope of future favors. Even the prospect of a desirable vacancy precipitated an indecent scramble for the place. Before the body was cold, contenders were posting to press their claims upon patrons. In a letter to the Duke of Newcastle dated 10 June 1734, Thomas Newton urged: "I think it my duty to acquaint your Grace that the Archbishop of York lies a-dying, and, as all here think, cannot live beyond tomorrow morning, if so long; upon this occasion of two vacancies, I beg, I hope, I trust your Grace's kindness and goodness will be shown to one who has long solicited your favour."[13]

Though success might bring the rising churchman gain and gratification, it certainly brought him no emancipation. Even a bishop was still in the power of political chieftains. The value of different sees varied enormously. Canterbury was worth £7,000 per annum, Durham £6,000, Winchester £5,000; but at Rochester the income was only £600, at Oxford £500, at Bristol £450. Yet in the poorer sees a bishop's expenses were little less than those of his more favoured brethren. Normally a man was elevated first to a poor bishopric. He acquired prestige, but poverty was entailed upon him until the government saw fit to translate him to a more lucrative position. Such promotion had to be deserved, and it was earned by faithful political service. For a considerable part of each year the bishop was expected to take his place in the House of Lords. If he had the gift of oratory, he would use it to support the party that had appointed him, but at least the way he used his vote would be carefully observed. Independence was not merely discouraged, it was severely penalized. An indiscreet bishop might be left in his poor see till he had digested the bitter fruits of insubordination.

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[12] Quoted in Darrell Friend, Burning Bush (New York, 1963), p. 41.

[13] Quoted by Friend, p. 121.

The government's favorite device was known as "translation"; it was nearly infallible. A promising cleric would be first appointed to one of the least desirable bishoprics. Then, if he behaved himself by voting right and talking well, he could move up to a middle-range see like Lincoln. Finally, he might aspire to one of those sees endowed with great prestige, munificent funds, and lucrative patronage, such as Canterbury or Durham.

For a few, the church became the road to wealth, but the rise from rags to riches by way of the church became less common as the century wore on, for an increasing number of well-born men appeared in the ranks of the clergy, giving cause for a measure of gratification, touched with relief, for this removed the scandal that "not many noble are called." The younger sons of the nobility were candidates for bishoprics and deaneries, those of the gentry for prebends and the richer benefices. As a result, the higher clergy were often related by kinship as by interest to the leaders of the political parties. The need for an income appropriate to a noble cleric made the practice of accumulating preferments even more common than before.

Pluralism, under prevailing conditions, was inevitable. The income of many livings was patently insufficient to support the incumbents. At the beginning of the eighteenth century over 5,500 livings (more than half the total) were worth less than 50 a year, over 2,100 less than 30, over 1,200 less than 20. Under such circumstances, pluralism was the only alternative to drastic reform (which should have been taken). The result was that a few men grew rich; the rest were condemned to hopeless poverty. Pluralism led inevitably to non-residence, and many of the curates who served the churches were forced to live on starvation wages. Usually they received from £20 to £30 a year, and the glaring contrast between the curate's plight and the good fortune of his richer brethren created bitterness. "There the old rascal goes," cried Smollett's curate after meeting his vicar at the inn, "and the d---l go with him. You see how the world wags, gentlemen. By Gad, this rogue of a vicar does not deserve to live; and yet he has two livings worth 400 per annum, while poor I am fain to do all his drudgery . . . ; for what?

why, truly for £20 a year" (Roderick Random, Chapter XI).

Under such conditions as these it was inevitable that the quality of the clergy would decline, and Charles Wesley's hymns frequently called attention to the worldliness of his brethren. The following poem which excoriated such worldly preachers needs little comment:

Alas, for us, who need beware
Of men, that sit in Moses' chair,
  And should to heaven the people guide!
Men with the pomp of office clad,
In robes pontifical array'd,
  But stain'd with avarice and pride:
They love to be prefer'd, ador'd,
Affect the state and stile of lord,
  And shine magnificently great;
They for precedency contend,
And on ambition's scale ascend
  Hard-labouring for the highest seat.

The church they call their proper care,
The temple of the Lord they are,
  Abusers of their legal power;
Greedy the church's goods to seize,
Their wealth they without end increase,
  And the poor Widow's house devour.
O what a change they soon shall know,
When torn away by death, they go
  Reluctant from their splendid feasts,
Condemn'd in hottest flames to dwell,
And find the spacious courts of hell
  Pav'd with the skulls of Christian Priests.
(XI, 273-274)

Hell may be "paved with the skulls of Christian Priests," but what of the sheep that follow them? Wesley answers this question in a hymn entitled "A Wicked Priest":

The wisdom of our Lord would chuse
  A traitor by the fiend possest,
That none the guiltless may accuse,
  Or stumbling at a wicked priest,
Deny the Ministerial call,
And dare for one to censure all.

Whate'er the messenger he sends,
  He gives the efficacious grace;
The word and sacrament depends
  On Christ for its assur'd success,
Whate'er of good on earth is done
Christ hath done it all, and Christ alone.
(XI, 113)

The responsibility of the sheep is clear, but Wesley frequently points out in his hymns that the office of the cleric is of divine authority:

Impower'd thro' _Moses_ hallowing hands,
Aaron before the altar stands,
  The consecrated priest of God!
JESUS _his_ officers ordains:
And thus the _Christian_ priest obtains
  The gift by elders hands bestow'd.

Ye that uncall'd the power assume,
Expect the rebels fearful doom;
  The pit its mouth hath open'd wide
For _Jesu_'s sacrilegious foes!
Repent before its mouth it close
  On all the hard'ned sons of pride.
(XIII, 129)

Unquestionably there were worthless and dissolute parish priests, and the satirists make the most of the fact. It is only just to point out that there was another side to the picture, as the novels of the period remind us. Though we have Fielding's Supple and Thwackum, we also have Parson Adams and the Vicar of Wakefield. Philip Watson insists that there must have been much that was good in the Church of England during the eighteenth century, otherwise it could not have retained the loyalty of men like Dr. Johnson.[14] In some respects, Dr. Johnson and Charles Wesley saw the Church of England in the same light--both men saw the evils, but they wished to reform it from _within_.

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[14] _The Message of the Wesleys_ (New York, 1964), p. 120.

The final conclusion on the state of the Church of England as it is related to Wesley's hymns is that the entire Methodist Movement was a revolt against the worldly attitudes and materialistic concepts which had developed, and the hymns of Wesley reflect this trend to a considerable degree. Much of the imagery in the hymns points to an insistence on the simple virtues which the early Methodists prized so highly.

The third element of the eighteenth century which molded the hymns of Charles Wesley--the Methodist Movement--was to a great extent the result of evils existing within the Church of England. The weaknesses of the established church--its failure to provide adequate care, the inflexibility of its parish system, its neglect of the new towns--left a vast and needy population waiting to be touched by a new word of power.

Before examining the characteristics of the Methodist Revival, however, it should be pointed out that the evangelical revival cannot be equated with the Methodist Movement, still less with the life of the Wesleyan societies. Whitefield, after parting company with Wesley on doctrine, continued to work along parallel lines, though with more ephemeral results. After his comparatively early death, Calvinistic Methodism was prominently represented by the Countess of Huntingdon, who offered Methodism to the upper classes (with little success). In the closing years of the eighteenth century, the Evangelicals made rapid headway. John Newton, William Romaine, and Thomas Scott were active in London; however, not many of the Evangelicals were in positions of power. The significant thing is that the Evangelicals, unlike the Methodists, remained within the church.

Methodism had its roots in the "religious societies" which abounded in the beginning of the eighteenth century. These were primarily groups of young men who gathered regularly for the purpose of strengthening their religious lives through prayer, reading the Bible, and mission work. "By 1700," Williston Walker states, "there were nearly a hundred in London alone, and they were to be found in many parts of England and even in Ireland. One of these societies was formed by John Wesley's father, Samuel Wesley in Epworth in 1702. . . . They were composed almost exclusively of communicants of the establishment. Many of the clergy looked upon the movement as 'enthusiastic,' or as would now be said 'fanatical,' and after 1710 it measurably declined, though the 'societies' were to continue and be of importance in the beginning of Methodism."[15]

The group which Charles Wesley organized at Christ Church was known as the "Holy Club," and it is a revealing commentary on the condition of the Hanoverian church that their program--Bible study, prayer, charity--provoked ridicule. From this small group the Wesleys departed for Oglethorpe's new colony of Georgia. Their stay at that place was brief, for as one Anglican put it "Wesley's work in Georgia was marred by a singular want of common sense and ordinary prudence."[16] It is likely that John Wesley at this stage of his career was confused, but in London on 24 May 1738 his vision came:

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[15] A History of the Christian Church (New York, 1959), p. 455.

[16] G. G. Perry, A History of the Church of England (New York, 1879), p. 591. Subsequent references to this work will be placed in the text.

> In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter to nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt that I did trust in Christ, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death. (Journal)

John Wesley had no intention of leaving the established church, but more and more he found the doors were closed to him. In 1739 he made the decision which was to change the course of the entire movement. "At four in the afternoon," Wesley records in his Journal on 2 April 1739, "I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence . . .. to about three thousand people. The scripture from which I spoke was this . . . 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath annointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.'"

The day that John Wesley stepped out of doors to preach marks the beginning of one of the most remarkable episodes in Protestant Christianity. If he had remained inside, the Methodist Movement would have smothered itself beneath the cloak of smooth Anglican order, but by choosing the highway Wesley addressed himself to that very level of society that the established church had ignored for years. His message was tempered by his hearers for he spoke to those who were uneducated, and his brother's hymns took their form for the same reason. The nature of his constituency determined the character of his program, and he relied increasingly on the gifts and capacities lying dormant in the average man. This meant that he had to train his people, and often they had to be taught the simplest duties of the Christian life. This accounts for the didactic nature of Charles Wesley's hymns, for they were an educational weapon in John Wesley's program.

This choice of John Wesley to preach to the lower classes leads directly to the influence which economics exerted on his movement. There is, of course, a strong economic influence in the background of nearly all sects, for these groups originate mainly among the religiously neglected poor, who find the conventional religion of their day unsuited to their social and psychological needs. This is true of Christianity itself, which was three hundred years old before it attracted considerable numbers of the socially well-placed. Finding themselves ill at ease in the presence of a prosperous bourgeoisie, their emotional natures unsatisfied by a middle-class complacency, their economic problems disregarded by those who have no such problems to meet, and their simple faith smiled upon by their more cultured fellows, the poor and ignorant revolt and draw apart into groups which are more congenial. They elevate the necessities of their class--frugality, humility, and industry--into moral virtues and regard as sins the practices they are debarred from embracing. Those pinched by economic circumstances look askance at theatergoing, card playing, and "putting on of gold and costly apparel," but indulge in the same when their earthly fortunes improve. Their standards of conduct are invented from the simple lives they are compelled to lead, and they give free rein to their emotions and attribute the pleasant thrills thereof to a divine agency. They look for an escape from their hard lot into a heaven of comfort which is foreign to their workaday existence, and usually picture a time when the judgments of society shall be reversed and they shall change places with the prosperous, who shall be cast down while the pious poor shall be exalted. They espouse their tenets with almost fanatical devotion and regard themselves as the true beloved of God. As Richard H. Niebuhr indicates:

> The really creative, church-forming, religious movements are the work of the lower strata. Here only can one find that union of unimpaired imagination, simplicity in emotional life, unreflective character of thought, spontaneity of energy and vehement force of need, out of which an unconditioned faith in a divine revelation, the naivete of complete surrender, and the intransigence of certitude can rise.[17]

There is a certain danger to this process, for in the second generation the sect begins to lose its character. The need for indoctrination of the young in the peculiar doctrines arises, and those who are trained in the sect seldom espouse its principles with the same devotion as those who were initiated therein by personal experience. The virtues of frugality and industry bear fruit in prosperity, and when prosperity comes, the reasons for the sectarian revolt disappear and the manner of life against which the fathers rebelled is embraced by their children. Thus the spiritual need and economic forces which in one generation drew the sect out of the church turn about to transform the sect into a church.[18]

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[17] _The Social Sources of Denominationalism_ (New York, 1946), p. 29.

[18] The last century witnessed the completion of this process in the case of Methodism. The Church of the Nazarene is now in the period of transformation.

John Wesley, creator of a typical sect of the poor and ignorant, clearly foresaw this evolutionary process:

> I do not see how it is possible in the nature of things for any revival of religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches.[19]

The process was under way in his time:

> The Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away.[20]

Wesley had indeed a formula to prevent this development. He could not prevent people from gaining all they could, but he could warn them of the danger.

> What way can we take, that our money may not sink us into the nethermost hell? There is one way and there is no other way under heaven. If those who gain all they can, and save all they can, will likewise give all they can, then the more they gain, the more they will grow in grace, and the more treasures they will lay up in heaven.[21]

In propounding his remedy for the prevention of "pride, anger, and love of the world," Wesley did not take into account the psychology of the rich, who are not disposed to give away all the fruits of their frugality and industry.

This economic factor in the Methodist Movement was to be reflected in the hymns of Charles Wesley. The worker is urged to accept his station in life:

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[19] "Thoughts Upon Methodism," Works, (VIII, 317).

[20] Ibid., p. 318.

[21] Ibid., p. 323.

The Task thy Wisdom hath assign'd
  O let me chearfully fulfil,
In all my Works thy Presence find,
  And prove thine acceptable Will.
(III, 22)

At the same time he should beware the danger of money:

Preserve me from my Callings's Snare,
  And hide my simple Heart above,
Above the Thorns of Choaking Care,
  The gilded Baits of Worldly Love.
(V, 50-51)

Worldly pleasures are often rebuked in the hymns, but Charles Wesley often suggested other and more harmless activities. In one hymn which he entitled "Innocent Diversions" he suggested that virtuous pleasure was readily available:

  Come let us anew
  Our Pleasures pursue:
  For _Christian_ Delight
The Day is too short; let us borrow the Night.
  In sanctify'd Joy
  Each Moment employ,
  To Jesus's employ,
And spend, and be spent in the Triumph of Grace.

  The Slaves of Excess,
  Their Senses to please
  Whole Nights can bestow,
And on in a Circle of Riot they go:
  Poor Prodigals, They
  The Night unto Day
  By Revellings turn,
And all the restraints of Sobriety scorn.

  The Drunkards proclaim
  At Midnight their Shame,
  Their Sacrifice bring,
And loud to the Praise of _their_ Master they sing:
  The Hellish Desires
  Which _Satan_ inspires,
  In Sonnets they breathe,
And shouting descend to the Mansions of Death.

The Civiller Croud,
In Theatres proud,
Acknowledge his Power,
And Satan in Nightly Assemblies adore:
To the Masque and the Ball
They fly at his Call;
Or in Pleasures excel,
And chaunt in a Grove to the Harpers of Hell.[22]

And shall we not sing
Our Master and King
While Men are at rest,
With JESUS admitted at Midnight to feast?
Here only we may
With Innocence stay,
The Enjoyment improve,
And abide at the Banquet of JESUS's Love.
(V, 282-284)

The texture of the Methodist Movement is made up of the simple virtues of the poor, and it was only natural that the more expensive habits of the wealthy should be under suspicion. The leaders of the Movement were in conscious revolt against many of the characteristic aspects of their age, and their protest against its frivolity intensified the puritanical strain so congenial to their Calvinistic outlook. Condemning cards, theatres, dancing, and all amusements that savoured of dissipation, they kept steadily in the forefront of their thought the high seriousness of life and the dread solemnity of death, and they insisted that the demands both of time and of eternity can be met victoriously only by those who rely completely upon divine aid.

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[22] Frank Baker in Representative Hymns indicates that "This line was brought up against Wesley when in later years his own son Charles became a musician. He faced the challenge boldly, and in February, 1769, read out a public proclamation on the subject, containing the following passage: 'How can I call musicians harpers of hell, yet breed my Son a Musician? I answer, there are Heavenly as well as Hellish Harpers. . . . Therefore the term is too general & liable to be misunderstood. For which reason I have altered it long ago; as you will find, if that hymn is ever reprinted.' It was reprinted, many times, in the Watchnight Hymns, but Charles Wesley's emendation did not appear"(p. 115).

Methodism sprang up within the Church of England, and both Wesleys were determined that it should never separate from it. Early in his ministry when John Wesley was asked "In what points" the Methodists differed from the Church, he replied "In none. The doctrines we preach are the doctrines of the Church of England; indeed, the fundamental doctrines of the church, laid down in her prayers, articles, and homilies. I live and die a member of the Church of England."[23] This is not an isolated statement; it can be multiplied times without number, and resolutions of the conference reinforced the doctrines of the Wesleyan church. The final breach, however, was inevitable, for the Hanoverian Church was ill equipped to deal with such a phenomenon as Methodism. G. G. Perry in his _History of the Church of England_ speaks with a bitter tone when he insists that John Wesley "disliked separation from the Church, he constantly spoke in the strongest way against it, but he _did nothing to hinder it_. He allowed the machine which he had set in motion to take its course. He saw probably that that course was inevitable, and though he perhaps salved his own conscience by his protests against dissent, yet if Methodism was not to be had without dissent, he was prepared to accept it at this price" (p. 594).

There is not space in this thesis to discuss the influence which the Methodist Revival had on the age, but certainly both Charles and John Wesley were resolute in attacking the abuses which they recognized in public life. With every means at their disposal they opposed bribery and corruption in politics. They campaigned ceaselessly against the press gang, and insisted that no Methodist should have any part in smuggling or in the plundering of wrecked vessels. Nor should their unflinching stand against slavery be overlooked.

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[23] Quoted in C. E. Volliamy, _John Wesley_ (New York, 1931), p. 132.

In certain respects, however, the hymns of Charles Wesley reflect more unhealthy aspects of the Methodist Movement. His views, like those of his brother, were restricted by his dislike of popery and his fear of its influence. In this he shared the attitude of a generation which clung too tenaciously to the fears rekindled by James II, and on this question his views were those of his great contemporary, the Earl of Chatham. There are liberal doses of anti-Catholic references in his hymns, and one of the most shattering blows in his later life was the occasion when he was informed that his son Samuel had become a Roman Catholic. Though not a hymn, the lines which Charles Wesley wrote on this occasion reveal his bitterness toward the Roman Church:

Farewell my all of earthly hope,
My nature's stay, my age's prop,
  Irrevocably gone!
Submissive to the will divine
I acquiesce, and make it mine.
  I offer up my Son.

But give I God a sacrifice
That costs me nought? My gushing eyes
  The answer sad express,
Which bleeds with its belov'd to part
  Which breaks thro fond excess.

. . . .

But hear my agonizing prayer
And I, preserve him, and prepare
  To meet me in the skies
When thron'd in Bliss the Lamb appears,
Repairs my loss and wipes the tears
  For ever from my eyes!
(VIII, 422-423)

This and other weaknesses of the Methodist Movement are part of Charles Wesley's works, for they were built into the age just as firmly as were the virtues. The hymns can be explained, as can many features of the Methodist Movement, in terms of the needs of the time and the gift of the man who met them through music. The less admirable elements of the entire movement are to be found again and again in the pages of the hymn-books. Most of the hymn writers developed an almost morbid preoccupation with death. In their reaction against rationalism they allowed unfettered scope to the emotions. Because the prevalent theology had developed Latitudinarian, even Socinian, tendencies, they deprecated intellectual pursuits and relied on an uncritical Biblical literalism. Stock phrases supplanted reasoned arguments, and a distinctive idiom became the badge of piety. These and other flaws in the thinking of Charles Wesley are reflected in his use of images, and I shall point them out as they occur.

Any discussion of the background of Wesley's hymns would be incomplete without some mention of enthusiasm, and one may begin with Horace Walpole, one of the most unsympathetic writers about Methodism in the Eighteenth Century. His letters between 1748 and 1751 are packed with references to the Methodist Movement, and he apparently disliked everything about it, thinking that all Methodists were madmen or hypocrites. His irritation increased as time went on, because the

Movement did not die away as he expected. His account is particularly interesting, since he gives several descriptions of fashionable meetings and many lists of society people who followed Whitefield for a time. He makes clear better than anyone else how fashionable Methodism was in the period around 1750. On 3 September 1748 he wrote, "This nonsensical new light is extremely in fashion, and I shall not be surprised if we see a revival of all the folly and cant of the last age. Whitefield preaches continually at my Lady Huntingdon's, at Chelsea; my Lord Chesterfield, my Lord bath, my Lady Townshend, my Lady Thanet and others have been to hear him. What will you lay that next winter he is not run after instead of Garrick?"[24]

On 23 March 1749 he told Horace Mann: "Methodism is more fashionable than anything else but Brag; the women play devilish deep at both" (HWC, XX, 41), and on 3 May 1749 he wrote him again:

> Here is a bon-mot of my Lady Townshend: we were talking of the Methodists; somebody said, 'Pray, Madam, is it true that Whitefield has recanted?' No, Sir, he has only canted.'
>
> If you ever think of returning to England, as I hope it will be long first, you must prepare yourself with Methodism. I really believe that by that time it will be necessary; this sect increases as fast as almost any religious nonsense did (HWC, XX, 52).

In 1753 he was more cheerful and was able to note, "Methodist is quite decayed in Oxford, its cradle. In its stead there prevails a delightful fantastic system called the sect of the Hutchinsonians" (HWC, III, 192). About ten years later he repeated some tales he had heard about the Methodists believing in the "Cock Lane Ghost" and adds, "Methodists, as

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[24] Horace Walpole's Correspondence, ed. W. S. Lewis (New Haven, 1937--), IX, 73-74. Subsequent citations of this work will be placed in the text and the abbreviation HWC employed.

Lord Aylsford assured Mr. Chute two nights ago at Lord Dacre's, have attempted ghosts three times in Warwickshire" (HWC, X, 7).

Walpole's intense dislike of these disturbers of his peace is shown in many little remarks, as, for example, when he is writing about John Wilkes: "I think Wilkes a bad man. . . . Thank God that he has not turned Methodist" (HWC, XXIII, 87). He termed Whitefield an "arch rogue" who was encouraging men to forge and murder, because he preached a funeral sermon on James Gibson when he was hanged for forgery (HWC, I, 134-135), and he raised the same objection to Methodists visiting Dr. Dodd in prison: "These gentry, the Methodists, will grow very troublesome or worse; they were exceedingly unwilling to part with that impudent hypocrite, Dr. Dodd, and not less, to have forgery criminal" (HWC, XXVIII, 319). He believed that even when Methodism did not directly encourage forgery and roguery it raised other vices: "For the Catholic religion, I think it very consumptive--with a little patience, if Whitefield, Wesley, my Lady Huntingdon, and that rogue Madan live, I do not doubt we shall have something very like it here" (HWC, I, 124). In 1766 he went to hear Wesley preach at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel in Bath, and on 10 October described in detail the scene:

> I have been at one Opera, Mr. Wesley's. They have boys and girls with charming voices, that sing hymns, in parts, to Scottish ballad tunes; but indeed so long, that one would think they were already in eternity, and knew how much time they had before them. The chapel is very neat, with true Gothic windows. . . .
>
> Wesley is a lean, elderly man, fresh coloured, his hair smoothly combed, but with a soupcon of curl at the ends. Wondrous clean, but as evident an actor as Garrick. He spoke his sermon, but so fast, and with so little accent, that I am sure he has often uttered it, for it was like a lesson. There were parts and eloquence

> in it; but towards the end he exalted his voice, and acted with very ugly enthusiasm.[25]

Walpole was correct in thinking that Wesley had preached the sermon before, because he was using one of his favorite texts. In his Journal for 5 October 1766 Wesley wrote, "At eleven I preached at Lady Huntingdon's Chapel at Bath on these words in the Gospel for the day: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' The word was quick and powerful; and I trust many of the rich and great, felt themselves sinners before God."

Walpole never gave up hope that the fire would die down. His last reference to the Methodists shows that old age had not dimmed his hope. On 23 June 1791 he wrote, "The patriarchess of the Methodists, Lady Huntingdon, is dead. Now she and Whitefield and Wesley are gone, the sect will probably decline: a second crop of apostles seldom acquire the influence of the founders (HWC, XI, 296-297).

I have quoted at length from Walpole's correspondence for his attitude is typical of a large segment of the population of the eighteenth century. The strict emphasis on reason which had dominated the earlier part of the period was only beginning to loosen its grasp, and the age would not be transformed into the Age of Sensibility for a few years. The day had not been long since Hobbes and Glanvill had vindicated reason as an antidote to enthusiasm. Locke's hostile critique of enthusiasm and Shaftesbury's insistence on regarding sound sense as an instrument to test whether a spirit be of God had not yet been forgotten, nor had Hume's hostility to a swollen imagination, which unless it were checked in time by reason, would lead to enthusiasm.

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[25] The Letters of Horace Walpole, ed. Mrs. Paget Toynbee (Oxford, 1903-1905), II, 336. This letter does not appear in the Lewis edition.

This antagonism to enthusiasm existed in both religion and poetry. At the Restoration a reaction against the rampant "enthusiasm" of the Puritans was certain. Men turned from the inner light to experimentation and from indulgence in imagination to the cultivation of reason. The Anglican Church took up a moderate position between the authoritarian emphasis of Rome and enthusiasm. Dryden's *Religio Laici* illustrated the appeal to common sense, and Pomfret's *The Choice* insisted that the middle way leads to happiness. The decorum of the Anglican Church paralleled the decorum of literature. Much as dissenters in religion were condemned for singularity, so eccentrics in art were disparaged as unnatural.

It was inevitable that dissatisfaction both with the coolly rational religion of the deists and with the mechanical rituals of the Church of England (which had become more a social than a religious institution, and looked suspiciously on any exhibition of deep religious feeling) produced a more deliberate cultivation of the emotions. The result was the Evangelical Movement, but the emotionalism connected with it (especially with Methodism) was an unfortunate side effect as Rose Macaulay indicates: "Wesleyanism is, in many respects, by far the most important phenomenon of the century. . . . It represents heat without light--a blind protest of the masses, and a vague felling after some satisfaction to the instincts which ends only in a recrudescence of obsolete ideas."[26]

Just how "enthusiastic" was Charles Wesley? His hymns, we realize, are filled with exclamation points, and he has not a single scruple about taking his own emotional pulse in public. Indeed, the hymns are without doubt filled with sentiment (or sentimentality), and there is no denying that the excesses of the mobs that crowded around John and Charles Wesley often exceeded normal behaviour. The question is, then, how genuine was this emotion--or for the purpose of this thesis, how did the emotional background against which he wrote his hymns affect his art?

It should be pointed out that Charles was the more sensitive of the two brothers. As Charles Wesley Flint expresses it in _Charles Wesley and His Colleagues_: "John was not wholly lacking in feeling, but Charles was preeminently a man of feeling. John put it tersely but truly when he called himself 'the head' and Charles 'the heart' of their joint work. . . . Although John had some poetic sense, his best poems were translations or adaptions, while Charles was a creative poet _par excellence_. Certain qualities of personality go with a poetic nature, with a man of heart and emotion rather than of reasoning." (p. 120) The question is not, however, was Charles Wesley a man of feeling, but are his hymns sentimentalized?

The answer to this is that since hymns have to make an immediate appeal to the heart, rather than to the intellect (often of simple people), there is often in them an element of sentiment, even of sentimentality. On the whole the great hymn writers--Watts, Wesley, Cowper--avoid this, but it is undeniable that all of these at times allowed sentiment to become too prominent. Some of this tendency in Charles Wesley's hymns may be accounted for by the fact that he was a mystic to some degree, or at least in his youth he was strongly influenced by William Law and some of the German mystics. He brought into English hymnody the note of rapture, and it is significant that when he chose a hymn of Dr. Doddridge for one of his hymn books, he altered one word in the following verse. It was the word "pleasure" to the word "rapture."

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[26] _Some Religious Elements in English Literature_ (London, 1931), p. 23.

> Ye humble souls that seek the Lord,
> Chase all your fears away:
> And bow with pleasure down to see
> The place where Jesus lay.

This rapture is more allied to mysticism than to any other facet of religion; it is perhaps the key to the movement, for many of his hymns sound this note of mystic (or enthusiastic) union with God.

The emotional quality of the Methodist Movement is paralleled by the prominence of emotion found in the Pre-Romantics. The whole climate of English thought was in the state of change. Two words were frequently employed for a new symptom of English life. "Sentiment" and "enthusiasm" were everywhere spoken of, and, although they meant different things to different minds, they indicate the new spirit of the age. They were labels, perhaps too carelessly used, tossed to and fro haphazardly in contemporary reviews and controversy. The latter term especially was a storm-centre. Whether applied to literature or religion, it conveyed contempt. Wesley particularly disliked the word "enthusiasm" and was continually attempting to free himself and his followers of its incubus. Hence his famous Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion. It is full of close and attractive reasoning, among the best of his writings, and sparkles with apt quotation and literary allusion. As the title indicates, Wesley appeals to men as thinking beings, and urges them to use their brains when practicing their religion.

When we contrast the calmness of John Wesley's own style (and Charles preached in much the same manner), with the madness of Berridge, the wild fervour of Whitefield, and Newton's alleged fanatical treatment of Cowper; when we consider his extraordinary coolness in the presence of frenzied mobs and the quiet order and method of his life, the evidence suggesting wild enthusiasm is insignificant in comparison. As H. D. Traill insists: "If this was fanaticism, it was fanaticism that for more than fifty years bore the strain of one of the most strenuous and perfectly organized lives that ever lived."[27] He repeatedly begged his preachers to refrain from fanaticism. "God deliver us from reforming mobs . . . a calm even spirit goes through rough work far better than a furious one." In A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion he presents his own definition of enthusiasm. He bases it on a lengthy quotation from the Anglican Homilies, ending:

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[27] Social England (London, 1897), p. 139.

"God give us grace to know these things, and to feel them in our hearts." He cannot understand, in view of this definite teaching of the Anglican Church, how it is that, on mentioning any of these great truths, even among men of education, he is immediately dubbed an enthusiast in a scornful sense. Such an accusation, he says is merely begging the question. What is an enthusiast? Few have any idea of the meaning of the word. It is not, he points out, a sort of religious madness, a false imagination of being inspired by God. It is the perception through faith of spiritual realities. God reveals, inspires, breathes into the soul. And although it is an emotional experience, Wesley insists that it is also rational and scriptural, and as pure from enthusiasm (so-called) as from superstition. Sufficient justice has not been done to the unusual reasonableness of John Wesley's attitude or to Charles Wesley's hymns, for in both we have not the tidal wave of rank emotionalism for its own sake, but a genuine depth of spiritual perception under perfect control.

It is difficult to say whether Methodism chiefly contributed to the new surge of sentiment, or whether it benefitted from it. On the whole, it would appear that the feeling or emotion connected with Methodism was deeper and more genuine than that generally reflected in eighteenth-century romanticism. At the very least, we may say that the temper of Methodism was true to the romantic doctrine of creative excitement, that there can be no abiding value without passion.

The doctrine of personality is clearly seen in Wesley's hymns. Everywhere the individual was coming into his own. The cry of liberty was in the air. From abroad came the influence of the teaching of

Rousseau and the doctrines behind the French Revolution. In other directions than those of pure romance and wonder the soul of man was stirring. Men were discovering that they had feelings, that they had temperaments. They had instincts and dispositions peculiar to themselves. Again, it was the emergence, unconscious and vague, of modern psychological tendencies. It was the dawn of self-analysis, the beginning of the emancipation of the Ego.

This emphasis on the ego is almost omnipresent in Charles Wesley's hymns.

O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art!
When shall I find my longing Heart
  All taken up by Thee?
I thirst, I faint, and die, to prove
The Greatness of redeeming Love,
  The Love of CHRIST to me.
(IV, 341)

As Wesley continues the hymn, it is obvious that God is expected to notice the individual, for it is a poem about the emotional needs of a single human being:

God only knows the Love of God.
O that it now were shed abroad
  In this poor stony Heart!
For Love I sigh, for Love I pine:
This only Portion, Lord, be mine,
  Be mine the better part.

Admittedly, this is not one of Wesley's masterpieces, but it does reveal the emphasis which appears in most of his hymns--emotional (or spiritual) satisfaction. It is also true that some of his work degenerates into morbid self-analyses:

O what an evil Heart have I,
  So cold, and hard, and blind,
With Sin so ready to comply
  And cast my God behind!
(IV, 445)

But this is almost always followed by rejoicing:

> My God, I am thine,
> What a Comfort divine,
> What a Blessing to know that my JESUS is mine!
> (V, 24)

There are even lines which tell us that our emotion must be controlled:

> I want an even strong Desire,
> I want a calmly-fervent Zeal,
> To save poor Souls out of the fire,
> To snatch them from the Verge of Hell.
> (V, 105)

It is fair, I think, to point out that just as the Pre-Romantics were pioneers in introducing along with their new concepts of nature a fresh note of wonder so the hymns of Charles Wesley, to some degree, took religion and breathed into it fresh meaning, making it glow with color. And if it be true that his work sometimes falls into bathos, it is just as true that the vast majority of his hymns are filled with simple emotion stated in simple terms.

The fifth influential factor on Charles Wesley's hymns is the literary background. The death of Pope in 1744 marks the close of a literary era. John Wesley's second birth occurred in 1738, and the hymns of Charles Wesley were produced, for the most part, in the period between 1740 and 1780. In other words, the work of Wesley looks backward to the Augustans and forward to the beginning of the Romantic movement; it is apparent that both traditions are reflected in the hymns.

The age of Queen Anne produced, it is true, many poets whose verse suggest indifference, hostility, or an ambiguously sceptical attitude toward religion; however, one of the chief things that strikes one in any varied reading of eighteenth-century writers in verse or prose is the widespread piety that they express. "It was an age," as Rose Macaulay points out, "in the main, not of scepticism, not of religious speculation or doubt, but of general and rather complacent faith in a religion both natural and revealed."[28] In spite of "complacent faith," the general literary interest in religious questions was acute. Theological controversy was common among men of letters (who were nearly all amateur theologians), and it is evident that in an age that felt no shame at hurling insults at the physically deformed, at the lowly born, at hostile critics, or at those who differed from them in politics, the sharpest barbs were reserved for those who denied the Great Designer. Rose Macaulay insists that

> The mild and benignant Addison, the sentimental and kindly Dick Steele, were roused to hatred at the very thought of a Deist; the far from mild, benignant, sentimental, or kindly Dean Swift spat at them his most poisoned venom, more poisoned even than that which he aimed at Dissenters, Whigs, those who would repeal the Test Act, and the whole human race; Pope, from out of his neat temple of Natural Theology, looked with demure shudders at Atheists who denied the Great First Cause. He might, in a couplet or two in the _Essay on Man_, seem to say that all religions are the same if they lead to a good life; but he knew that Atheism could lead to no good life. (p. 138)

The religious tone in the writings of the early eighteenth century was,however,based on a common sense approach to piety rather than the mystic experience set forth by Wesley. God, nature, and reason are intertwined for the true Augustan. Robinson Crusoe, for example, is as respectable, shrewd, and God-fearing on his island as any merchant in London. He is as careful of the decencies of his clothes and person as any chapel-goer, and he scrupulously reads his Bible, prays, meditates on the ways of God, and converts the heathen. It is true that some of the heathen must be shot to pieces (in order to rescue their Christian prisoners), but this is the "practical" brand of Christianity which the eighteenth century prized so highly. The poetry of Defoe clearly reveals his conviction that the test of true religion is virtuous conduct, for as he puts it in his Reformation of Manners:

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[28] _Some Religious Elements in English Literature_, p. 23.

> Blush England, hide thy Hypocritick Face,
> Who has no Honesty, can have no Grace.
> . . . .
> Virtue's the Light by which Religion's known,
> If this be wanting, Heaven will that disown.

For Defoe and his contemporaries, religion is not shrouded in mystery but can be understood by everyone:

> Naked and plain her Sacred Truths appear,
> From pious Frauds and Dark Aenigma's clear:
> The meanest Sence may all the Parts discern,
> What Nature teaches all Mankind may learn:
> Even what's reveal'd is no untrodden Path,
> Tis known by Rule, and understood by Faith,
> The Negatives and Positives agree,
> Illustrated by Truth and Honesty.

This deluge of moralistic writing which appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century served in a way to prepare the audience of Charles Wesley.

Another influence of the Augustans on Wesley's hymns (one that has not been noted to my knowledge) is the impersonal tone which frequently appears. Perhaps the most characteristic quality of Wesley's hymns is their personal tone, the "I" which constantly comes before us; however, there are many hymns which, if not as distant in their approach to God as Addison's "The Spacious Firmament on High," do not contain the ego-centered persona which Wesley usually employs. His hymns usually begin with something like "How shall I to Heaven aspire?" or "Thee, O my God and King,/ My Father, Thee I sing!," but we find none of this in the following lines:

> Thou God of Truth and Love,
>   We seek thy Perfect Way,
> Ready thy Choice t'approve,
>   Thy Providence t'obey,
> Enter into thy wise Design,
> And sweetly lose our Will in Thine. (V, 22)

Except for the "we" and the word "sweetly," there is none of Wesley's usual approach here. The "wise Design" refers, of course to the Great Designer, and not to the friendly God whom Wesley usually envisions. The hymn continues this formal address, and in the last stanza there is a union of the great Design with the more common forms which Wesley liked to employ:

> There, only there we shall
>   Fulfil thy great Design,
> And in thy Praise with all
>   Our Elder Brethren join,
> And hymn in songs which never end
> Our Heavenly Everlasting Friend.

This type of hymn is not typical of Wesley, but in at least fifty of his songs we find the tone of the previous age winning the victory, to some extent, over the more passionate expression of the Romantics.

Another way of stating this is to say what is generally recognized--the Augustans favored restraint in literature while the later writers, for the most part, did not. This may be said of society as a whole, for as James Sutherland indicates:

> Restraint, propriety, an absence of emphasis, consideration for others and the desire to give them pleasure, a willingness to subordinate what is merely personal or private or a matter of 'self-expression' in favour of what is generally interesting and universally intelligible in polite society, a sense of proportion, the avoidance of mere display, the conscious imitation of the best models--these are some of the qualities the eighteenth century understood and practiced.[29]

This quality of restraint, Sutherland points out, existed in conversation, architecture, and literature.

Attitudes toward self-display in literature changed rapidly during the latter part of the eighteenth century; men grew fond of taking their emotional temperature in public, and it became almost a contest to see who could feel the most deeply. To many of the earlier writers, this sort of thing was much the same as coming upon the poet in his underclothes. What came naturally to Wordsworth was difficult and even embarrassing to the eighteenth-century poet.

Although the hymns of Charles Wesley contain echoes of Augustan piety in a formal and didactic manner, the influence of the more emotional writers is far more evident. The rather morbid preoccupation with death, for example, and the delight with skulls and charnel houses which appeared early in the eighteenth century apparently infected Charles Wesley. Not one of the so-called Graveyard School could safely challenge the following lines:

Ah! lovely Appearance of Death!
  No sight upon Earth is so fair:
Not all the gay Pageants that breathe
  Can with a dead Body compare.
With solemn Delight I survey
  The Corpse, when the Spirit is fled,

---

[29] Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry (London, 1948), pp. 65-66.

In love with the beautiful Clay,
  And longing to lie in its stead.

How blest is our Brother, bereft
  Of all that could burthen his Mind!
How easy the Soul, that hath left
  This wearisom Body behind!
Of Evil incapable thou,
  Whose Relicks with Envy I see;
No longer in Misery now,
  No longer a Sinner like me.

This Earth is affected no more,
  With Sickness, or shaken with Pain:
The War in the Members is o'er,
  And never shall vex him again:
No anger hence forward, or Shame,
  Shall redden this Innocent Clay;
Extinct is the Animal Flame,
  And Passion is vanish'd away.

This languishing Head is at rest,
  Its thinking and Aching are o'er;
This quiet immoveable Breast
  Is heav'd by Affliction no more:
This Heart is no longer the Seat
  Of Trouble and torturing Pain,
It ceases to flutter and beat,
  It never shall flutter again.

The Lids he so seldom could close,
  By Sorrow forbidden to sleep,
Seal'd up in eternal Repose,
  Have strangely forgotten to weep:
The Fountains can yield no Supplies,
  These Hollows from Water are free,
The Tears are all wip'd from these Eyes,
  And Evil they never shall see.

To mourn and to suffer is mine,
  While bound in a Prison I breathe,
And still for Deliverance pine,
  And press to the Issues of Death:
What now with my Tears I bedew,
  O might I this moment become,
My Spirit created anew,
  My Flesh be consign'd to the Tomb!
(VI, 193-195)

This hymn appeared in a collection entitled Funeral Hymns and is considered by many to be a sterling example of the proverb: "The Methodists die well." What consolation it brought to the survivors of the deceased can only be imagined! This joy in the presence of death was characteristic of early Methodism, but the following hymn is, perhaps, more typical of Wesley's contributions to funeral hymns than the one above:

Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd,
  (Our Loss is his infinite Gain)
A Soul out of Prison releas'd,
  And freed from its bodily Chain:
With Songs let us follow his Flight
  And mount with his Spirit above,
Escap'd to the Mansions of Light,
  And Lodg'd in the Eden of Love.

Our Brother the Haven hath gain'd,
  Outflying the Tempest and Wind,
His Rest He hath sooner obtain'd,
  And left his Companions behind;
Still toss'd on the Sea of Distress,
  Hard toiling to make the Blest Shore,
Where all is Assurance and Peace,
  And Sorrow and Sin are no more.

There all the Ship's Company meet,
  Who sail'd with the Saviour beneath,
With Shouting each other they greet,
  And triumph o'er Trouble and Death:
The Voyage of Life's at an End,
  The mortal Affliction is past,
The Age that in Heaven they spend
  For ever and ever shall last.
(VI, 189-190)

This personal, emotional response to death (and to any human experience) would come to fruition only with the Romantics, but there is little doubt that Methodism fostered very considerably the revival of emotionalism in English life.

Other factors must not be overlooked; the "Graveyard School" and the Continental tendencies focused in writers like Goethe and Rosseau, for example, played no small part. But Methodism helped to feed the new emotional stream in at least three ways. First, it contributed its own strength to the early stirrings of the Romantic impulse. To prevailing sentiment (much of it superficial), it added the stronger and deeper emotions of religion. Secondly, it helped considerably by filtering the new stream through its many new and rapidly increasing agencies to almost every part of English life. The more cultured and well-to-do assimilated the new tendencies quite apart from Methodism, but the bulk of the population was still illiterate. The cultural life of the community, outside the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, was restricted for the most part to the coffee-houses and literary coteries. Wesley helped to dig new literary channels, and his cheap books, popular magazines, circulating libraries, Sunday schools, and hymn books brought the new tide to the people. Hymn singing is the third movement which introduced emotionalism into English life. In an age when Church singing was mainly restricted to unaccompanied psalms and uninspired paraphrases, Charles Wesley's rollicking anapaestics encouraged the flood of emotionalism which soon transformed itself into the sentimental novel and other literary experiments.

One final relationship which Wesley's hymns bear to the literary background of his age deserves some mention, and that is the matter of language. In Chapter One I discussed briefly the diction of the hymns, but it should be kept in mind that the language of poetry during the eighteenth century was the subject of a revolution of sorts. This revolution was brought to a head by the experimental issue of Lyrical Ballads in 1798. The volume produced widespread excitement and discussion, but a second edition in 1800 included Wordsworth's famous Preface setting forth his theory of poetry in general, and of poetic diction in particular, while subsequent editions contained added Prefaces and an Appendix enlarging his views. Wordsworth declared that the function of poetry is to describe, as far as possible, incidents and situations of ordinary life in ordinary language. This he qualified to the extent of confessing that it is necessary to throw over such language a certain imaginative colouring and feeling. He urged the choice of rustic and humble themes and characters, hence his own recurring subjects of shepherd, farmer, beggar, and travelling tinker. He believed that in such conditions of life "the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language." We know how Coleridge criticized this statement, pointing out that it is unsound, and that Wordsworth's own examples prove it is so. But behind Wordsworth's experiments was something more fundamental and far-reaching than the introduction of a new theory of class diction; although some of his examples, as examples, are perhaps unfortunate, his innovations strengthened considerably existing tendencies towards simplification and renovation in English style.

The movement began much earlier. To discover its first inception would mean going back to the familiar speech of the Bible, recalling the plea of Dionysius for the use of "the most ordinary and humble words, such as might be employed by any farmer or seaman or workman," and the suggestion of Longinus that "the most homely language is sometimes far more vivid than the most ornamental, being recognized at once as the language of common life, and gaining immediate currency by its familiarity. . . . Such terms come home at once to the vulgar reader, but their own vulgarity is redeemed by their expressiveness." The actual movement which came to a head in Wordsworth was the natural reaction to Augustan artificiality and to the rich but distorted effects of the Metaphysicals.

When we come to the hymns of Charles Wesley, we find them definitely in line with these theories. In the first place, the very nature of their purpose--the appeal to the common man--bound them to greater simplicity and flexibility of style. Wesley, however, did not deliberately stoop to win popular applause (as did many of the hymn writers who followed him), for as I shall indicate in Chapter Three, he frequently used words which he knew to be over the heads of his audience.

Charles Wesley did what Wordsworth was later to proclaim; he spoke to men in their own language. The iron-workers in Newcastle, sweating and begrimed as they tended their furnaces, were taught to look beyond their daily labour to a wider horizon of which it was the symbol:

> See how great a flame aspires,
> Kindled by a spark of grace.
> Jesu's love the nations fires,
> Sets the kingdoms on a blaze.
> To bring fire on earth He came.
> Kindled in some hearts it is;
> O that all might patch the flame,
> All partake the glorious bliss!
> (V, 120-121)

The converted Cornish fishermen would sing, as they put out to sea:

Teach me to cast my net aright,
The Gospel net of general grace,
So shall I all to Thee invite,
And draw them to their Lord's embrace,
(III, 221)

while the quarrymen of Portland called upon God in words that kept pace with the rhythm of their work:

Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
And break these hearts of stone!
(X, 211)

To the Staffordshire miners, stumbling up into the sweet air from the darkness of the coal-pit, a new world lay open to the inner eye, no less than to the outer:

Lift up your eyes, ye sons of light,
Triumphant with my Lord and me,
Look on the fields and see them white,
Already white to harvest see!
Moved by the Spirit's softest wind,
The sinners to their Saviour turn.
Their hearts are all as one inclined:
There hearts are bowing as waving corn.
(III, 246)

The simple and exact word is the intent of the writer, and his hymns remain, to a great degree, a monument to the movement toward simplicity and clarity of diction.

CHAPTER III

THE POETIC TECHNIQUE OF CHARLES WESLEY

In this chapter I shall analyse some of the literary characteristics of Charles Wesley's hymns. Setting aside his use of imagery, there are five facets of his style which are highly significant in a study of his work--diction, metre, rhyme, structure, and repetition. It will not be possible, of course, to investigate these elements in great depth in one brief chapter; however, even a cursory examination will help to reveal the nature of Wesley's accomplishment as a poet.

The diction which Wesley employed in his hymns is based on two traditions--the classical background which was the foundation of his education and the English Bible. Although no one could overlook the tremendous influence which the Bible plays in Wesley's hymns, little work has been done on the influence of the classical tradition.

As Henry Bett indicates the most striking result of Wesley's education on his hymns is the tendency to incorporate polysyllabic Latinate words into the texture of his verse in such a manner that they illustrate his theme and introduce a modulation into the verbal music without disrupting the rhythm.[1] Adjectives and adverbs ending in "-able," "-ably," and "ible" were particular favourites, but nouns and verbs were employed with similar effect. A well-known example is found in the opening stanza of one of his Nativity Hymns:

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[1] "Some Latinisms in Wesley's Hymns," London Quarterly and Holborn Review, CLIX (1938), 308-319.

> Let Earth and Heaven combine,
>   Angels and Men agree
> To praise in Songs divine
>   Th'Incarnate Deity,
> Our GOD contracted to a Span,
> Incomprehensibly made Man.
> (X, 109)

This illustrates the threading of Latinisms on the staple Anglo-Saxon of his diction--"songs/divine," "contracted/span," and "incomprehensibly/ man." Moreover every word is used precisely, not only carefully chosen and placed, but so carefully chosen and placed that clear thought about its exact meaning is demanded of the reader. Wesley's is the art of the etcher--sharp and definite rather than vague and suggestive.

Some editors, however, are basically afraid of precision and profundity in hymns and are also prone to confuse a lengthy word with prolixity. An interesting example is to be found in "O Thou who camest from above." Wesley wrote:

> There let it for thy glory burn
> With inextinguishable blaze.
> (IX, 58-9)

This was too much for the compilers of the 1904 edition of Hymns Ancient and Modern, who substituted tautology--"with ever-bright, undying blaze." This version did not find its way into the "Standard Edition" of Hymns Ancient and Modern and has been refused entry to the 1950 edition; however, it has been retained in the BBC Hymn Book.

It must be granted that Wesley's introduction of Latinisms in order to point and illustrate his thought does not always prove successful, mainly because he is writing over our heads. Most of us lag far behind him in our familiarity with the Classics; it needs, therefore, not only a mental effort, but the consultation of a lexicon, in order to appreciate fully some of his words and phrases. We are in much the position of the rank and file of Wesley's converts; we get the gist of his thought through the sturdy Anglo-Saxon and are swept past the finer points of the Latin allusion. A few familiar examples may be quoted, prefaced by the warning that because they are familiar we may miss their fuller significance:

> Blest with this Antepast of Heaven! (I, 91)
>
> Bear'st them thro' Life's departed Wave (IV, 302)
>
> Unmark'd by Human Eye,
> The latent Godhead lay.[2] (IV, 109)
>
> Concentred all thro' JESUS' Name. (IV, 252)

Greek words are nothing like so frequent in Wesley's verse as those from ancient Rome, and they almost always come from the Greek of the New Testament. A familiar example in his use of "panoply" (the original is πᾶνοπλία) in "Soldiers of Christ, Arise." (V, 40-41) Another occurs in a favourite stanza of both Dr. Bett and Mr. Manning, taken from one of Wesley's *Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake* (1750), where he describes the unshaken house awaiting the Christian in the City of God:

> Those amaranthine bowers,
> Inalienably ours,
> Bloom, our infinite regard,
> Rise, our permanent abode,
> From the founded world prepared,
> Purchased by the blood of God.
> (VII, 78)

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[2] The phrase about the "latent Godhead" is apparently a reminiscence of St. Thomas Aquinas, who in his hymn *Adoro te devote* used the words "latens Deitas."

Both Bett and Manning point out the Latinism of "founded" and the retention of the original Greek in the musical "amaranthine." I may add the point that this latter retention is quite deliberate, since the English translation "never-fading" would have fitted Wesley's metre equally well.[3]

Occasionally there are references to or reminiscences of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. In some stanzas on Isaiah 9:6-7, "The mighty God, the everlasting Father," Wesley prefixed the normal translation of the Authorized Version, but in the poem itself instead of "everlasting Father" used the literal translation from the Hebrew, "Father of Eternity." Similarly, in the phrase from Psalm 85 about man being made "a little lower than the angels" he preferred the original (which is followed by the Revised Version) and read "a little lower than God," somewhat to the consternation of the non-Hebraists among the Methodists.[4]

When all has been said, however, it must be reasserted that the basic texture of Wesley's speech was provided by Anglo-Saxon, in which every now and then was woven a bright pattern of classical words. Wesley's Anglo-Saxon was derived to a great extent from the Bible, and--in spite of his careful study of the original tongues--from the King James Version of the Bible. This was partly because biblical words and phrases permeated the atmosphere which he breathed as a boy at Epworth and partly because the solid purity of their diction appealed to his clean, direct mind. Even his pre-conversion translations from the classics are more Anglo-Saxon than Latin in their vocabulary. Certainly after his conversion he deliberately chose home-spun diction, both because it was the language of the English Bible and because it was the surest way to the mind of the ordinary man. Although Wesley is occasionally Miltonic in his use of sonorous Latin words, in general he is much more akin to his distant relative Daniel Defoe in his use of robust, though rarely colloquial, common speech. Charles Wesley's Latinisms generally enforced and illustrated for the educated man the basic meaning conveyed in the staple Anglo-Saxon to the illiterate worshipper. The deliberate Latinisms, therefore, are comparatively few, though always significant.

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[3] Henry Bett, The Hymns of Methodism (London, 1945), pp. 81-95. Subsequent citations of this work will be placed in the text and the abbreviation HM employed.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 76-78.

The predominant use of the mother tongue was the more noteworthy in an era of neo-classicism, when scholars were fond of larding their weighty tomes with Greek and Latin quotations. John and Charles Wesley sometimes used Latin and Greek in conversation and in correspondence for the sake of privacy or precision and knew as many classical tags as the next Master of Arts, but both carefully refrained from any form of classical ostentation. Just as their volumes were reduced in size, so their sentences were freed from superfluity and ambiguity for the sake of the "man in the street." They wrote plain English for plain people. This economy in words was the result in part of training, in part of a purified taste, and in part of deliberate restraint for the purposes of evangelism. The result both in prose and verse was a lucid, direct, forceful style whose influence on the spread of Methodism and

English literature was greater than has often been recognized.

This tendency toward the plain style in contrast to much of the elaborate and fanciful verse of the eighteenth century has been noted By Adam Fox:

> In the eighteenth century generally speaking the language of verse was elaborate and fanciful and full of classical allusions. Such was the style of Pope and Gray, but then Pope and Gray evidently wrote for the better-educated part of the community. One needed to know a good deal to appreciate them. One needed among other things to know pagan mythology, and the ordinary hymn singers then had no more use for that than the hymn singers of today. But fortunately the typical prose of the eighteenth century, on the other hand, was plain. Addison wrote his essays in a plain style. Hume wanted above all things to make his philosophy plain. Law in The Serious Call is as plain as a pikestaff. Goldsmith as a prose writer is all ease and plain language. And it was this language to which the hymn writers had recourse. The best prose writers of the period tried very successfully to write much as they spoke, and the hymn writers did the same. In fact they were bound to do so, since they were writing largely for people who read very little besides their hymn books.[5]

There is, of course, a practical reason for Wesley's predominant use of Anglo-Saxon, this language is direct and monosyllabic compared with the elaborations and profundities of Latin and Greek. Words derived from Anglo-Saxon are likely to be more vigorous than those from the classical languages, whose strength is found in the ability to express a finer precision of thought. The one is more suitable for action, the other for contemplation. For the most part Charles Wesley's verse was not mystical or quietly contemplative; certainly it does not embody an eager pursuit of knowledge for its own sake. The note of wonder and awe is never far away, but primarily Wesley's hymns are poems of action--of theological action, the action of God in Christ, matched by the responding action of man.

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[5] English Hymns and Hymn Writers, p. 29.

This marriage of common speech to the timeless realities of personal religion rather than the jargon of the *literati* harnessed to the latest academic or scientific fashion almost preserves Wesley from the charge of being "dated." Almost, but not quite. His verse contains a few less happy Latinisms and some archaic grammatical constructions. He frequently introduces words with unpleasant connotations to modern congregations, such as "bowels," "blood," and "worms"--though the criticism here must be levelled at the Bible rather than at the eighteenth century. There is, nevertheless, surely some truth in Dr. Bett's claim that Wesley's vocabulary is "distinctly the most modern diction to be found in eighteenth-century verse" (HM, 31). In some of the hymns of the Evangelical Revival the language of the common man which Wordsworth sought so painfully was used at its most colloquial or with exaggerated technicalities and sentimentalities of contemporary piety at its worst, but in those of Charles Wesley it was normally purified and strengthened, yet rarely stilted or erudite.

Nevertheless Charles Wesley was ready to experiment with uncommon words, particularly with lengthened and strengthened forms of common words, even though they involved the wedding of Anglo-Saxon and Latin. Some such words were already available for him, though they might be archaic. Such was "implunge," used in his brief but exhilarating response to the invitation of Revelation 22, "And let him that is athirst come," where nothing but the biggest words would do for the climax:

> Thy call I exult to obey,
>   And come in the Spirit of Prayer,
> Thy joy in that happiest day
>   Thy kingdom of glory to share;
> To drink the pure river of bliss,
>   With life everlasting o'erflow'd,
> Implung'd in the chrystal abyss,
>   And lost in an ocean of God!
> (XI, 430)

Occasionally he would coin a word. One very interesting example occurs in a well-known poem, but has been almost lost either through carelessness or timidity. In "Soldiers of Christ, Arise" Wesley originally wrote:

> Extend the Arms of mighty Prayer
>   Ingrasping all Mankind.
> (IV, 40)

Although in Wesley's day "grasp" might be used for "embrace," the normal meaning was "to inclose in the Hand, to take hold on with the Hand, to seize on" (Bailey's Dictionary, 15th ed, 1753). Wesley could perfectly well have used the word "embracing," but its sentimental connotations might well have cheapened his climax; he therefore set aside the conventional word for the bold experiment, and his coined "ingrasping" is a robust word which creates a clear mental image of the mighty arms of prayer spreading wide enough to hold all men within their embrace. Yet in face of the orthodoxy of printers and the obstinacy of congregations, he seems eventually to have acquiesced in the splitting of this powerful coining into its two components.

Whether derived from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, or from a combination of two of them, Charles Wesley was constantly searching for the right word. His success can be appreciated by an examination of what is perhaps his best known hymn, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," which was published in *Psalms and Spiritual Hymns* in 1740 soon after his return from America:

> Jesu, Lover of my soul,
> Let me to thy bosom fly,
> While the nearer waters roll,
> While the tempest still is high!
> Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
> Till the storm of life is past;
> Safe into the haven guide,
> O receive my soul at last.
>
> Other refuge have I none;
> Hangs my helpless soul on thee:
> Leave, O leave me not alone,
> Still support and comfort me:
> All my trust on thee is stayed,
> All my help from thee I bring;
> Cover my defenceless head
> With the shadow of thy wing.
>
> Wilt thou not regard my call?
> Wilt thou not accept my prayer?
> Lo! I sink, I faint, I fall--
> Lo, on thee I cast my care:
> Reach me out thy gracious hand!
> While I of thy strength receive,
> Hoping against hope I stand,
> Dying, and behind I live!
>
> Thou, O Christ, art all I want;
> More than all in thee I find;
> Raise the Fallen, cheer the Faint,
> Heal the Sick and lead the Blind,
> Just and holy is Thy Name,
> I am all unrighteousness:
> False and full of sin I am,
> Thou art full of truth and grace.
>
> Plenteous grace in thee is found,
> Grace to cover all my sin:
> Let the healing streams abound;
> Make and keep me pure within.
> Thou of life the fountain art,
> Freely let me give of thee:
> Spring thou up within my heart,
> Rise to all eternity.
> (I, 259-260)

2

Examining only the diction of the hymn, we find that of the 236 words of the poem all but thirty-seven are monosyllables. It stands today as Wesley wrote it except that the subjective "be" in the sixth line is changed to "is" and the original third stanza is omitted. The change of the verb form is merely to accord with the trend of language to drop subjunctives. The stanza omitted is as good lyric poetry as the rest, but it is a shade too fervent for moderns. The title Wesley gave the hymn was "In Time of Prayer and Temptation," later "In Temptation." Like most hymns, however, it is known by its first line. The Latin vocative in the opening line, "Jesu, Lover," is usually printed in the English form. There have been several attempts to change the imagery of the hymn, and with these I will deal later, but the diction of the poem stands as a tribute to Wesley's mastery of the language.

It is, of course, the English Bible that provides Wesley with a never-failing source of words. A detailed familiarity with the scripture was the dimension which marked all his hymns, and through the Scripture-saturated hymns of Charles Wesley the Bible-reading and the hymn-singing of the Methodists were mutually enriched.

Much has already been written about the wealth of Scripture allusion and diction in Wesley's hymns, and undoubtedly much more will yet be written. There is no need to labour the point, but two illustrations may be given. In Wesley's day it was quite unnecessary to expound to a Methodist congregation the closing lines of "Sing to the Great Jehovah's Praise" (VI, 16), which are usually omitted nowadays either because of their theology of the Second Advent or because of the misleading Latinate construction of the second line. As so often, the hymn ends in heaven, with the Second Coming of Christ, but this is illustrated by a double metaphor from the Old Testament:

'Till Jesus in the clouds appear
  To Saints on earth forgiven,
And bring the grand Sabbatic year,
  The Jubilee of Heaven.

More subtle is the way in which Charles Wesley equates his conversion with the Spirit of God brooding over the face of the waters when the earth was without form and void (Genesis I:2):

  Long o'er my Formless Soul
  The dreary Waves did roll;
Void I lay and sunk in Night:
  Thou, the overshadowing Dove,
Call'dst the Chaos into Light,
  Bad'st me Be, and live, and love.
(I,99)

There are even echoes of Biblical commentaries in Wesley's verse. In "O Filial Deity" (I, 97-99) Dr. Bett notes that there are seven expressions taken directly from Luther's commentary on Galatians (HM, 94-97), and Dr. Erik Routley has demonstrated Wesley's indebtedness to the better-known commentary of Matthew Henry in "Wrestling Jacob" (II, 173-176), "Captain of Israel's Host" (IX, 43), "A Charge to Keep" (IX, 60-61), and other hymns.[6] Wesley's verse is an enormous sponge filled to saturation with words, similes, metaphors, stories, and ideas taken from the Bible. In the thirty-two lines of "With glorious clouds incompast round" (VII, 194-195) Dr. W. F. Moulton found references to no fewer than fifty verses of scripture.[7] Indeed, in the words of

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[6] _Hymns and the Faith_ (Greenwich, Conn., 1956), pp. 46-49.

[7] _Proceedings_ of the Wesley Historical Society, I, 26-27.

J. E. Rattenbury, " A skilful man, if the Bible were lost, might extract much of it from Wesley's hymns. They contain the Bible in solution."[8]

The second poetic technique of Charles Wesley that deserves attention is his metrical versatility. Quite possibly this is his greatest contribution to the hymn, for it is clear that he emancipated English hymnody from the shackles which had been laid upon it by his predecessors. He refused to be limited to the confines of traditional metres, exhibiting rather a freedom of rhythm which is not discernible in other and earlier hymn writers.

Until the time of Wesley hymns were written in one of three metres. Common metre (sometimes called "ballad metre") consists of four lines, the first and third lines having eight syllables and the second and fourth lines having six syllables. The second and fourth lines must rhyme; the first and second lines may rhyme.

> Come, HOLY GHOST, our Hearts inspire,
>   Let us Thy Influence prove;
> Source of the old Prophetick Fire,
>   Fountain of Life, and Love.
> (I, 238)

Long metre consists of four lines each having eight syllables, and the rhyme scheme is usually ABAB:

> Eternal Beam of Light Divine,
>   Fountain of unexhausted Love,
> In whom the FATHER's Glories shine,
>   Thro' Earth beneath, and Heav'n above!
> (I, 128)

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[8] The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns (London, 1941), p. 48.

A stanza of four lines, the first, second, and fourth lines having six syllables and the third having eight syllables is called short meter; it usually follows the same rhyme scheme as common metre:

> What doth that silence mean?
> Can man or angel shew?
> Away this noisy world between,
> And let me die to know!
> (XIII, 234)

In my appendices I have included a tabulation of Charles Wesley's favorite metres, and I employ the abbreviations which are customary when dealing with the metres of hymns. Common metre, for example, appears as 8.6.8.6 indicating that there are eight syllables in lines one and three, six in lines two and four. A stanza containing seven lines each having seven syllables is called 7.7s. Many stanzas have lines containing a different number of syllables; thus 7s and 6s indicates that the stanza has some lines of seven syllables and some of six syllables.

As Appendix F reveals, Charles Wesley refused to confine himself to rigid structures. In the following hymn, he offers a very effective verse in 7s and 6s in which a seven-syllable trochaic line is followed by a six-syllable iambic line:

> Glory be to GOD on high,
> And Peace on Earth descend;
> God come down: He bows the Sky:
> He shews himself our Friend!
> God th' Invisible appears,
> God the Blest, the Great I AM
> Sojourns in this Vale of Tears,
> And JESUS is his Name.

Him the Angels all ador'd
Their Maker and their King:
Tidings of their Humbled Lord
They now to Mortals bring:
Emptied of his Majesty,
Of his dazling Glories shorn,
Beings Source *begins* to Be,
And God himself is BORN!
(IV, 108)

This jumpy effect caused by the change in the alternate lines is a device peculiarly characteristic of Wesley. Here is another example:

CHRIST, whose Glory fills the Skies,
CHRIST, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the Shades of Night:
Day-spring from on High, be near:
Day-star, in my Heart appear.
(I, 224)

The quick succession of strong stresses in the last syllable of line 2 and the first syllable of line 3 has the effect of knitting the verse very tightly. The same device makes us rush almost breathlessly from line 4 to line 5. So it is that the four lines in the first half of the stanza are not separated from the four lines in the second half, as would happen if either iambic or trochaic measures were used alone.

For the student of prosody, Charles Wesley's experimentation with mixed metres, particularly mixed iambic and trochaic, is most interesting. Once the ear has become accustomed to the syncopated rhythm of these alternations between a rising and a falling beat, there is no gainsaying the force and virility of their challenge. According to Oliver A. Beckerlegge, Wesley's introduction to this alternating beat came through the singing of the Moravians,[9] but he made it completely his own, both simplifying it by concentrating on a few basic patterns, and at the same time extending the application of those patterns. He first experimented with the form 6 6.7.7.7.7, an iambic couplet quickened and strengthened by a cross-rhymed trochaic quatrain. This remained one of his favorite metres in which he wrote over 150 hymns, a total of nearly 4,000 lines. He next discovered the robust 7.6.7.6.7.7.7.6, cross-rhymed throughout, but with a group of three consecutive trochaic lines opening the second half and breaking the alternating trochaic-iambic sequence. In this he wrote about 3,500 lines, including "God of Unexampled Grace" and "Meet and Right It Is To Sing." He much preferred, however, the variant on which he quickly embarked, in which the alternation both of rhyme and beat was constant throughout, the fourth trochaic 7 being replaced by an iambic 8. Wesley wrote over 10,000 lines in this metre, which thus ranks as his sixth most widely used measure. None of his other mixed metres are of very frequent occurrence, with the exception of one which seems at first like a variant of the romance metre, 8 8.6.8 8.6, the second line being altered from an iambic 8 to a trochaic 7. This alteration was undoubtedly an attempt to secure an effect quite distinct from the smoothly running iambics, and Wesley wrote sixty-seven hymns with this as a basic pattern. Many of these unconventional mixtures have not been readily assimilated as hymns, no matter how effective they may be as poems.

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[9] "An Attempt at a Classification of Charles Wesley's Metres: A Contribution to the Study of English Prosody," *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*, CLXXI (1944), 233.

It is now fairly well known that Charles Wesley played some part in introducing anapaestic metres into religious verse, and into hymns in particular.[10] Watts wrote at least five anapaestic poems, and of course Prior and Swift had done much to elevate anapaestics from their crudest and clumsiest form in the street-ballad to an instrument fit for drawing-room satire. Wesley's popularization of the anapaest in his hymns seems to have been at least as important in improving its status as the secular poets, and he was a pioneer in making it the medium for the irrepressible lilt of emotions which burst the bonds of conventional verse, as they did of conventional religion. If not responsible for its introduction, it fell to his lot to bring it under firmer discipline and to train it for unaccustomed tasks.

Wesley's experimentation with anapaests began in 1741 with what became easily his most productive form, 5.5.5.5.6.5.6.5, cross-rhymed, and occasionally set out as 10 10.11 11. It was, of course, an adaptation of the old anapaestic ballad form, with the introduction of what we may call regularized variety, making the stanza both more satisfying and more amenable to congregational use. In this form he wrote no fewer than 4,000 lines, including some of his most popular hymns such as the following:

> O Heavenly King, Look down from above,
> Assist us to sing Thy Mercy and Love,
> So sweetly o'reflowing, So plenteous the Store,
> Thou still art bestowing, And giving us more.
>
> O God of our Life, We hallow Thy Name;
> Our Business and Strife Is Thee to proclaim;
> Accept our Thanksgiving For creating Grace,
> The Living the Living shall shew forth Thy Praise.

---

[10] See G. H. Findlay, "First and Last Words: A Study of Some Wesley Metres," London Quarterly and Holborn Review, CLXXX (1952), 123-128.

Our Father and Lord Almighty art Thou;
Preserv'd by Thy Word, We worship Thee now,
The bountiful Donor of All we enjoy,
Our Tongues to Thine Honour and Lives we employ.

But O above All Thy Kindness we praise,
From Sin and from Thrall Which saves the Lost Race,
Thy Son Thou hast given A world to redeem,
And bring us to Heaven Whose Trust is in Him.

Wherefore of Thy Love We sing and rejoice
With Angels above We lift up our Voice;
Thy Love each Believer Shall gladly adore
For ever and ever When Time is no more.
(II, 177-178)

The only other of his eleven anapaestic metres which tops the thousand-line mark is the cross-rhyming eight 8's as found in "Thou Shepherd of Israel" and in some of his funeral hymns. Altogether Wesley wrote some 10,000 lines of anapaestic verse.

One of the most interesting experiments of Wesley is his venture into the unnatural and almost ludicrous metre of 2.6's and 4.7's.[11] Some of his most characteristic hymns are in this strange form.

How weak the thoughts and vain,
  Of self-deluding men;
Men, who, fix'd to earth alone,
  Think their houses shall endure,
Fondly call their lands their own,
  To their distant heirs secure.

High on Immanuel's land
  We see the fabric stand;
From a tott'ring world remove
  To our steadfast mansion there:
Our inheritance above
  Cannot pass from heir to heir.

---

[11] Bernard Manning presents an interesting discussion of Wesley's use of metre in "Wesley's Hymns Reconsidered," London Quarterly and Holborn Review, CLXXI (1940), 19-30.

Those amaranthine bowers
  (Unalienably ours)
Bloom, our infinite reward,
  Rise, our permanent abode;
From the founded world prepared;
  Purchased by the blood of God.
(III, 126-127)

It is necessary, I think, to have in mind the precise wording of Psalms 49 in order to appreciate fully the intricate manner in which Wesley ties together the thoughts. To complicate the game Wesley throws the Saxon language abruptly against formidable Latinisms as the hymn proceeds: _mansions_, _inheritance_, _amaranthine_, _unalienably_, _infinite_, _permanent_.

These metres and many others Wesley experimented with, adapted, perfected, and invented. In Appendix F I have listed the most significant metres which he used. By far, however, the greatest bulk of Charles Wesley's verse is in the traditional iambic measure. This is where most versifiers both begin and end. Even the great Isaac Watts rarely ventured outside iambics. His thousand poems include only twenty-two in trochaic metres and five in anapaestic, while his iambics themselves are almost confined to common, long, and short metre. In all he used twenty different stanzaic forms, in addition to pindarics and three varieties of couplets. It is fairly clear that he was capable of much more in the way of lyrical experiment, but his position as a pioneer of hymn-writing at a time when few tunes were available restricted nine-tenths of his production to the three common forms. With Charles Wesley both the spiritual impulse and the lyrical versatility were greater, and the result was a burst of new measures, for some of which the tunes were specially composed, while the remainder were an enrichment of religious verse rather than of congregational worship.

Charles Wesley wrote in no fewer than forty-five iambic metres, and in each of fifteen of them wrote over a thousand lines of verse. He was most prolific in his favorite form of six 8's--8.8.8.8.8 8, rhyming ABABCC. In this metre he composed over 1,100 poems, a total of nearly 23,000 lines, most of them with a vigor, a flexibility, yet a disciplined compactness, that proved this to be the instrument fittest for his hand. It is the metre of what Watts considered Wesley's masterpiece, "Wrestling Jacob," and it represents more than one-tenth of his total output. Another favorite form was the old romance metre, 8 8.6.8 8.6, rhyming AABCCB, a metre which moves more rapidly than 8.8.8.8. 8 8. In this--the metre of Smart's Song to David--Charles Wesley wrote over 20,000 lines in 900 poems, including "O Love Divine" and "Be It My Only Wisdom Here." The iambic metres next most popular with him (in order of preference) were the cross-rhyming double long metre ("O Thou Who camest from above" in its original double form), the double short metre ("Soldiers of Christ Arise" and other marching poems), and the double common metre ("All Praise to Our Redeeming Lord" and "Sing to the Great Jehovah's Praise" in their original double form). The only rival to these forms was the mixed iambic-trochaic metres mentioned above. Only after these firm favorites with their six or eight lines do we come to the four-lined stanzas--common metre (7,000 lines) and cross-rhymed long metre (9,000 lines); the consecutive-rhyming long metre comes well below nine other metres with 2,500 lines, and the four-lined short metre is among the 'also-rans' with a mere 364 lines.

The third feature of Wesley's poetic technique I would like to call to attention is his rhymes. Charles Wesley believed rhythm to be a far more important element in poetry than rhyme, even though he never experimented in blank verse, and never took the easy way followed by Watts and others of being content with two rhyming lines per quatrain. It is, I believe, his sense of the respective importance of these elements of rhythm and rhyme, rather than his subordination of poetry to piety (as is often suggested), that leads to the frequent imperfection of his rhymes. If he had felt rhyme to be all-important, he would have thrown overboard many otherwise good lines, or remodelled them, but he knew that rhyme was a useful auxiliary rather than the essence of poetry, and so (as G. H. Vallins succinctly remarks) "he used it as a servant, but did not submit to it as a master."[12]

Some Charles Wesley enthusiasts have proclaimed him as a master of rhyme in a quite different sense; they can find no spot or blemish in this aspect of his verse. Surely this is blind worship, for it is obvious that Wesley often fails. Several cautions must be entered before criticizing the rhymes of Wesley's day--or, for that matter, of any day but our own. Many rhymes perfectly acceptable to an eighteenth-century ear sound clumsy today. Sometimes these changes are mere nuances of pronunciation, but occasionally they are much more obtrusive, involving not only the transformation of vowel sounds, but also the shift of accent from one syllable to another. Dr. Henry Bett carefully analysed both aspects of this subject, and pointed out that the following are perfectly good rhymes for the meticulous Pope and his contemporaries: "join/mine," "oil/smile," "shower/pour," "wound/found," "convert/heart," "great/feet," "God/rod" and "God/road." (HM, 54-56)

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[12] _The Wesleys and the English Language_ (London, 1957), p. 85.

Another possible source of unjustified criticism is the failure to recognize the poets' agreement that an "eye-rhyme" like "come/home" might occasionally serve as an understudy for an "ear-rhyme." Obviously this is a convention which must not be abused, for poetry is after all an appeal to the ear, even when it approaches the ear silently by way of the eye and the mind.

There is still another point of criticism to be considered in this matter of Wesley's rhymes. A number of them are perfect to the ear, but not to the mind, since they break today's accepted grammatical conventions. As an example we turn to the second stanza of "Jesus, United by Thy Grace," which would doubtless be much more popular but for one jarring word:

> Still let us own our common Lord,
> And bear Thine easy yoke,
> A band of love, a threefold cord,
> Which never can be broke.

This sounds either careless or criminal to the literary purist of today, yet caused no offence in Wesley's own time. His contemporaries knew that "broke" had not merely hobbled in to patch up the rhyme--it was a valid alternative for "broken." Within, as well as at the end of his lines, Charles Wesley continually uses unfamiliar grammatical forms, or, more frequently, familiar forms in an unfamiliar setting. He chooses that particular form for a particular reason, whether rhythm, rhyme, or music, but we can be sure in almost every case he was not in his own day considered guilty of any solecism. It is always wise when coming across what seems a peculiar grammatical usage in the writings of either of the Wesley brothers (or of other educated writers in that and previous ages) to assume that it is an example of changing customs rather than error. The Wesleys lived in a period of grammatical flux, and in his verse Charles Wesley sometimes made the best of both worlds. The fluidity was most noticeable in the past participle, which was frequently assimilated to the past tense--Gray's famous "Elegy" was originally described as "wrote in a country churchyard."

When all the excuses have been made, however, Charles Wesley must be adjudged guilty of having written, writ, or wrote many imperfect rhymes. Without labouring the point, we may instance the opening stanza of a well-known hymn where every rhyme is weak to say the least:

> Behold the Servant of the Lord!
>   I wait Thy guiding Hand to feel,
> To hear, and keep Thine every Word,
>   To prove, and do Thy Perfect Will.
> Joyful from all my Works to cease,
> Glad to fulfil All Righteousness.
> (V, 10-11)

Wesley, like other verse-writers, also found some difficulty in achieving sufficiently varied and pleasing feminine rhymes. In any case, he much preferred the masculine ending, apart from the fact that the accent on the closing syllable was simpler, necessitating a rhyme for that one syllable only. Indeed, because of this strong preference it is usually possible to say from a glance at the syllabic structure of his stanzas whether they are iambic, trochaic, or mixed: 6 or 8 syllables normally mean three or four iambic feet, ending with an accented syllable; 7 usually means four trochaic feet, again ending with an accented syllable; and a combination of 6 and/or 8 with 7 normally means a combination of iambic and trochaic, again with a closing accent for each line. This is by no means invariable, of course, with a poet of his versatility, but it is true in well over ninety percent of his verse.

Nevertheless Wesley was at least moderately successful with the feminine rhyme, particularly in the lighter form of Hudibrastic verse, where such rhymes as "walk in/talking" and "wearing/appear in" do not seem so incongruous as they would in hymns. As a matter of fact both examples quoted _do_ appear in a hymn, "O What Shall I Do My Saviour to Praise," from _Hymns and Sacred Poems_ of 1742. They are there printed as internal rhymes, however, where mere assonance might suffice. If we turn to the trochaic forms which forced him to frequent feminine rhymes, we see Wesley beset with the same kind of difficulty and often apparently not really worried whether he overcomes it smoothly or not. His best known hymn in that metre is probably "Love Divine, All Loves excelling." In that poem he uses the following imperfect feminine rhymes: "Compassion/salvation," "deliver/never." I do not add "Spirit/inherit" because this _was_ a good rhyme, the contemporary pronunciation of "spirit" approximating to "sperit." Occasionally his feminine rhymes consist of diphthongs like "fires/desires," which is tolerable, and "cares/snares," which to a modern ear certainly sounds like a masculine rhyme.

It is noteworthy that the rare stanza-forms in which Wesley used an unrhyming line were so framed in order to avoid the necessity of an added feminine rhyme, namely the iambic 8.7.4 4.7 and the related iambic-anapaestic variant 7.7.5.5.8; the unrhyming line in the trochaic metre, 8.7.8.7.4.7, also has a feminine ending. Only in the first form did Wesley write any considerable number of poems--forty, a total of over 1,000 lines. It led him to some strange expedients, as may be seen by looking at his most well-known hymn in that metre, "Head of Thy Church Triumphant" (IV, 79-80): "adore Thee/Glory," "favour/ever," It also led to the ingenuity of the "verb plus preposition" rhyme in one of his Hymns for Times of Trouble:

> Some put their trust in chariots,
> And horses some rely on,
>   But God alone
>   Our Help we own,
> God is the strength of Sion.
> (IV, 56)

We may sum up Wesley's attitude to feminine rhymes by saying that he did not really enjoy himself when he was writing under this type of discipline and much preferred the strong masculine ending.

A few sentences at least should be added about the more subtle forms of verbal music. To Wesley's sensitive ear individual words had a musical as well as a factual content, and occasionally their musical outweighed their mental value. We never find him deserting sense for sound, but he frequently rejected a word of simple sense and simple music for another which was harder to understand but contained more subtle or more rousing music. This is true of his classical vocabulary, examples being the beauty of "amaranthine" and the sinewy strength of polysyllables like "Inextinguishable" and "incomprehensible."

The fourth poetic technique of Charles Wesley which deserves some attention is structure. Newton R. Flew's _The Hymns of Charles Wesley: A Study of Their Structure_ offers the most penetrating examination of this feature of Wesley's hymns. He insists that Wesley purposed to teach through his hymns the lower orders--the boozers, the murderers, the harlots, and the thieves--and he states that Wesley called on his classical training to place order in his work. "But I think it is true to say that Charles Wesley has an orderly mind beyond all others of the great hymn-writers. One doesn't perceive it at first. But when the hymn is studied, the order is there." (p. 11). The order is there because Charles Wesley's education involved an important mental discipline which is uncommon today; he was trained, and to a small extent helped to train others, in the art of logic, though he never pretended to be the equal of his brother John in this field. The very size of his stanzas was conditioned by his logical approach. He wanted a stanza in which a theme could be announced, developed, and satisfactorily concluded--with a foreshadowing of the theme for the following stanza. He therefore showed a marked preference for the longer stanza rather than for the somewhat cramping limits of the conventional four lines. On the other hand, he carefully avoided as too heavy for lyrical verse the iambic pentameters so beloved of later hymn-writers and only used lines of more than eight syllables in strongly reflective poems or in his anapaestics, where the length was counteracted by the speed. Such was his fondness for lengthy stanzas that he not only doubled the 8 8.8.8 8.8 metre, but even the already doubled short metre, making a stanza of sixteen lines. Yet he mercifully allowed a central pause.

This stanzaic caesura is to be found also in most of his eight-lined stanzas--which is why later editors have so easily halved them, though not always without some slight disruption of their thought. Charles Wesley wrote several hundreds of poems in four-lined stanzas, but so appreciated intellectual elbow-room that of his total production of some 27,000 stanzas the over-all average is almost exactly six lines per stanza.

Within the stanzas themselves we find an orderly synchronization of thought and verse. In general every line contains a complete idea, is in fact a clause or a sentence. Similarly every stanza is a paragraph, and the whole poem a logically constructed essay in verse, or--to use the contemporary word of his grammar school and university days--a "theme." Charles Wesley seldom uses the run-on line or enjambment in order to link his verses together; instead, he uses the devices of repetition and similar figures, either of words or of thought. Corresponding with the verbal device of anaphora is the figure of thought termed parison. This balancing of clauses is the reverse of antithesis, where the thought of one clause forms a contrast to the thought of the other. Wesley normally combines it with some kind of verbal repetition. This is evident in lines such as "Publish at his wondrous Birth/ Praise in Heaven and Peace on Earth" (IV, 118) Parison is a favourite device with Wesley for knitting more closely the looser texture of the longer anapaestic lines:

> Your Debt He hath paid, and your Work He hath done.
> (IV, 372)
>
> The sweat of our brows, and the work of our hands.
> (V, 131)

In a paper read to the University Methodist Society at Wesley Church, Cambridge, on 20 November 1932, Bernard Manning has already drawn attention to Charles Wesley's skilful use of chiasmus. This device (from the Greek letter X or "chi") is the crossing of clauses in the pattern

A B
B A

It is almost the equivalent in thought of the verbal figure of antistrophe. The pattern ABBA is often readily distinguishable, as in the For + persons--mercy--mercy--For + person of

> For All thy tender Mercies are
> If Mercy is for me.
> (IV, 445)

As Manning points out, even in that supposedly non-literary poem, "Jesu, Lover of My Soul," there is a very interesting example of chiasmus:

> Just, and Holy is Thy Name A
> I am all unrighteousness B
> False, and full of Sin I am, B
> Thou art full of Truth and Grace A
> (PW, I, 258)

Not only is there the crossed pattern in the four lines as a whole--Saviour, Sinner, Sinner, Saviour but as Mr. Manning points out in The Hymns of Wesley and Watts, there are further examples of chiasmus in these same four lines: one in each of the two pairs AA, BB--personal pronoun, epithet, epithet, personal pronoun. Actually there are two further examples of a similar type in each of the consecutive pairs of lines, AB, BA, in this case epithet, personal pronoun, personal pronoun, epithet. (pp. 21-23)

I do not think it likely that Charles Wesley thought all of this out. But his mind was so accustomed to thinking in the intertwined formulae of logic as well as in the figures of rhetoric that his sentences often quite unconsciously assumed this form of patterns within patterns. Almost always the chiasmus in arrangement is combined with an antithesis in meaning, as in "Sow in Tears, in Joy to Reap" (VIII, 241) and "Who built the Skies/ On Earth he lies" (IV, 110). The chiasmus is one of the natural outworkings both of the essential paradoxes of the Christian faith and of the antithetical processes of Charles Wesley's literary art.

With this sense of balance in thought as well as in word we are not surprised to note how carefully Charles Wesley articulates his stanzas. As an example we may quote the following poem whose opening stanza provides a chiasmus in lines 1-2, another in lines 3-4, and a parison in lines 5-6:

> Thee, O my God and King,
> My Father, Thee I sing!
> Hear well-pleas'd the joyous Sound,
> Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
> Lost, I now in Christ am found,
> Dead, by Faith in Christ I live.
> (I, 96)

This stanza is in two distinct sections, as are all the stanzas in this poem and almost all of the stanzas which he wrote in this metre. The opening couplet introduces the theme, in this case of statement of intention, and the succeeding lines develop that theme, in this instance first by expanding the idea of praise introduced in "sing," and then by showing the reason for that praise, the restoration of a modern prodigal to his Heavenly Father through faith in Christ. The following stanza similarly announces the theme of "father and son" carried over from this stanza and then develops it by an extension of the idea of the wandering of the son and the welcome of the father. And so it goes on, the careful articulation of each stanza and of the stanzas into the poem as a whole.

In this particular metre the turning point in Wesley's thought is almost always the close of the first couplet, where the opening iambics are succeeded by the four trochaics, thought thus carefully matching metre--or vice versa. In other stanza-forms the articulation of Charles Wesley's thought is quite different, though it is always present--there is no wooliness in his thinking, no meandering. Particular stanza-forms were chosen (doubtless almost subconsciously) because they matched particular lines of thought. Thus Wesley's favourite 7.7.7.7.7.7 trochaic metre announces and develops the thought during the first four lines and then usually clinches the matter in the closing couplet, as we can see from the following:

Christ, whose Glory fills the Skies,
  Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
  Triumph o'er the Shades of Night:
Day-spring from on High, be near:
Day-star, in my Heart appear.
(I, 224)

Here the theme of Christ the "light of the world" is introduced by the invocation in lines 1-2, developed into a general prayer in lines 3-4, and in the parison of the closing couplet the movement from the general to the personal is clinched by the direct appeal, "in my heart appear."

Wherever we look in Charles Wesley's verse we find this development of thought. He does not simply choose his subject and walk round it, describing it from different viewpoints as he comes to them; even less does he drift on by the undisciplined process of the association of ideas; he analyses his theme carefully and moves in logical succession from one aspect to another. Movement, indeed, is one of the great characteristics of his verse. It is not merely evocation of emotion in a vague way, but takes us step by step along a planned pathway to a definite goal. As Manning puts it: "he binds his verses, not merely by rhyme, not merely by comparative thought, but by verbal references which without our noticing them, lead us from line to line."[13]

The structure of Charles Wesley's verse is probably affected by the fact that he was a preacher. The strict, logical order of thought which we find in his hymns is a reflection of his sermon-making. In "O what an evil Heart have I (IV, 445-447), this homiletic approach is quite evident. In the first stanza he offers his introduction:

O what an evil Heart have I,
  So cold, and hard, and blind,
With Sin so ready to comply,
  And cast my GOD behind!

Next he announces his text and even outlines his points:

What shall I do my GOD to Love,
  My Loving GOD to praise!
The Length, and Breadth, and Height to prove,
  And Depth of Sovereign Grace!

The following stanza is his "firstly"--the length of God's love:

Thy Sovereign Grace to All extends,
  Immense and unconfin'd,

---

[13] The Hymns of Wesley and Watts, pp. 15-16.

From Age to Age it never ends,
  It reaches All Mankind.

Next comes his "secondly," the breadth of God's love:

Throughout the World its Breadth is known,
  Wide as Infinity,
So wide, it never pass'd by One,
  Or it had pass'd by me.

Then his "thirdly," the height:

My Trespass is grown up to Heaven,
  But far above the Skies,
In CHRIST abundantly forgiven
  I see thy Mercies rise.

And "fourthly," the depth of God's love:

The Depth of All-redeeming Love
  What Angel-Tongue can tell!
O may I to the utmost prove
  The Gift unspeakable!

In the final stanza he works out his conclusion:

Assert thy Claim, receive thy Right,
  Come quickly from above,
And sink me to Perfection's Height,
  The Depth of Humble Love.

In this final stanza we note that he works his spatial relationships into a paradox parallel to (though quite different in content from) St. Paul's paradox about knowing the love which passes knowledge. Sometimes the sermon remains in embryo, as in an instance noted by Findlay, who points out that the repeated "Thou" opening three of the lines is for all the world like a preacher announcing his "heads":

Saviour in temptation Thou:
  Thou hast saved me heretofore,
Thou from sin dost save me now,[14]
  Thou shalt save me evermore.

---

[14] Christ's Standard Bearer (London, 1956), p. 37.

There is a concealed artistry in this stanza: the two basic words, "Thou" and "save" are both introduced in the opening line, in reverse order, so that there is not only both the anaphora and the anadiplosis on "Thou", and the traductio and mesodiplosis on "Saviour," "saved," "save," there is also a chiasmus between "Saviour" and "Thou" in the opening line and each of the following three lines.

Wesley is not alone in this kind of structure, of course. There are even more notable examples in Christopher Smart's _A Song to David_. Indeed, they are perhaps too notable--the machinery tends to creak. The opening lines of stanza 4 furnish us with a catalogue of David's virtues:

> Great, valiant, pious, good, and clean,
>   Sublime, contemplative, serene,
> Strong, constant, pleasant, wise!

Each of the following twelve stanzas deals (in the same order) with one of these virtues, and to ensure that the reader does not miss the point, each epithet opens its respective stanza, followed by a dash. Charles Wesley is never as obvious as that and is a far greater artist as a result.

We can be left in no doubt that Charles Wesley was as adept in marshalling thoughts as he was words and sounds, yet at the same time extremely versatile in varying the methods of his structure to the material which he was using and the purpose for which it was intended. He was undoubtedly a master craftsman in verse. The mastery is made even more impressive when we consider those deft touches of musical mortar with which he bonded together his structure of thought, whether in stanza or in poem--the patterns of sound.

A fifth device which Charles Wesley employed in his verse is that of repetition. In some ways this is the most interesting group of Wesley's rhetorical devices; they not only add strength and vigor to individual phrases, but also serve to bind together both lines and stanzas as I have indicated above. One of the simplest forms is common to most poets, namely anaphora, or the repetition of the same word at commencement of consecutive phrases or sentences or (in the case of poetry) lines. One example from Wesley will suffice:

> Enough for all, enough for each
> Enough for evermore. (I, 48)

The immediate repetition of a word or phrase within the same sentence (epizeuxis), is another common method of securing emphasis--"Who for Me, for Me hast dy'd" (I, 97-99). Less common generally, but frequent in Wesley, is epanadiplosis, the beginning and ending of a clause or line with the same word:

> "Come, Desire of Nations, Come" (I, 183-184)
> "Hide me, O my Savior, Hide" (I, 259-260)
> "Go, by Angel-Guards Attended,
> To the sight of Jesus go!" (V, 216)

Repetition of a word or words at the end of lines or phrases is known as epistrophe. A good example occurs in the following stanza:

> And can it be, that I should gain
> An Int'rest in the Saviour's Blood!
> Dy'd He for Me?--who caus'd his Pain!
> For Me?--who Him to death pursu'd.
> Amazing Love! how can it be
> That thou, my God, shouldst die for Me!
> (I, 105)

It will be noticed that the phrase "for me," although in each case it comes at the end of a phrase--indeed in the second instance it constitutes the complete phrase--is actually introduced in three different positions in the line and only comes at the end when it is most needed for emphasis, in the very last line. One reason is that Wesley knew the dangers of double rhymes, except in humorous verse. The other, and chief reason, is that Wesley used subtlety in his repetitions, so that they knocked at the back door of the subconscious mind and gained admittance when the master of the house was not always aware of how the visitation had occurred. Even more subtle is the effect of wonder created in the same stanza by the mesodiplosis or repetition of the phrase "can it be" in the middle of successive sentences, once near the beginning of a line and once at the end, first with the note of questioning predominant and then with the note of wonder that it really has happened.

Another common device which is very popular with Wesley is that of using the last word of one clause as the first of the following, thus ensuring both the emphasis of an important point and the continuity of the argument:

> Earnest Thou of Joys Divine,
>   Joys Divine on me Bestow'd.
>   (I, 99)

This taking up of an announced theme is very useful as a means of binding stanzas together, as may be seen in the following example:

> We our Dying Lord Confess,
> We are Jesu's Witnesses.
>
> Witnesses that Christ hath died,
> We with Him are crucified:
>   (I, 350)

People have racked their brains to find a descriptive title for this feature of his verse (just as teachers of English have racked their brains trying to get students to do exactly this thing with their prose). George A. Findlay gathered in Christ's Standard Bearer seventy examples from the 1876 Collection and chose to call the device "last and first words." (pp. 38-39) The Greeks had a word for this device; they called it by the mouth-filling name "anadiplosis."

Wesley's skilful use of repetition for the purpose of emphasis has been noted by both Manning and Flew, but its use for cohesion has only been hinted at. Many examples could be quoted both of stanzas and of whole poems whose theological theme is accompanied by a musical theme which renders the verse both continuous and compact. For a stanza we turn to the following, based on Ephesians 4:4-6:

> Build us in One Body up,
> Call'd in one high Calling's Hope:
> One the Spirit whom we claim,
> One the pure Baptismal Flame,
> One the Faith, and Common Lord,
> One the Father lives, ador'd
> Over, thro', and in us all,
> God Incomprehensible.
> (VI, 123)

The theme is announced in the opening line and is taken up by the fivefold repetition of "one" in the five following lines. Wesley is careful, however, not to overdo this repetition, allowing St. Paul's "One Lord" to enter in disguise--"One the Faith and Common Lord"--even though "One the Faith and one the Lord" would have fitted the metre perfectly and would have done as well.

The disciplined use of repetition constantly varied just before it is becoming too obvious is one of Wesley's strong points, appreciated all the more when turning from Christopher Smart. Stanzas 51-71 in Smart's A Song to David overdo the word "ADORATION" (always printed in capitals), and the following stanzas dwell at length on the adjectives "sweet" (72-74), "strong" (75-77), "beauteous" (78-80), "precious" (81-83), "glorious" (84-86), and their comparatives. It is all a little too mechanical and obvious, as if he were saying: "See how clever I am!" Wesley is much more subtle and self-effacing. His modulated repetitions are one of the great secrets of the success of his "Wrestling Jacob" (II, 173-176), underlining its deep emotion, yet never allowing that emotion to become maudlin. The two themes are thus announced in the closing couplets of Stanzas 1 and 2:

> With Thee all Night I mean to stay,
> And wrestle till the Break of day

And:

> But who, I ask Thee, who are Thou,
> Tell me Thy Name, and tell me now.

The succeeding three stanzas all end with a combination of these two themes:

> Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
> Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

The refrain is omitted from stanza 6, and only partially taken up in the closing couplet of stanza 7:

> I stand, and will not let Thee go,
> Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.

Stanza 8 provides a hesitant answer to half of this recurrent question:

> And tell me, if Thy Name is Love.

The following stanza triumphantly transforms the question into a proclamation:

> Thy Nature, and Thy Name is Love.

The constant ringing triumph of this same line closes each of the remaining five stanzas, always with a varied introductory line lest the thing become a mechanical refrain. This is only one element in the poem's literary achievement, but it is a very important one, as it is in many another of Wesley's most successful poems.

There are numerous forms of repetition to be found in Wesley's hymns, but I shall deal with only three more. The repetition of a phrase in reverse order is known as antistrophe. It occurs in a number of Wesley's well-known hymns, as in "Thine to Ours, and Ours to Thine" (I, 183-184), and it constantly forced itself upon him in his Trinitarian verse--"One in Three, and Three in One" (III, 333-334), and "Three in One, and One in Three" (VI, 464-465). Ringing the changes on different forms of the same word was known by the Latin term traductio, an example of which follows:

> My Second, Real, Living Life
> I then began to live.

Familiar to all writers of verse, good and especially bad, is the other device of repetition which we shall mention, the refrain, or (as the rhetoricians termed it) epimone. Wesley's use of the refrain really demands more attention than the space of this chapter permits. He employed it in strict moderation, knowing how easily a refrain can become forced or feeble, or the cloak for poverty of thought or craftsmanship. Wesley's are always strong phrases which readily stand up to repetition in a prominent position, though they are often movingly simple, like that to "O Love Divine, what hast Thou Done?", which is an adaptation from Ignatius' Epistle to the Romans--"My Lord, my Love is crucified." He never allows a refrain to be repeated too frequently, as may be seen from the variations of the last line in "Wrestling Jacob" quoted above. And he is adept at transforming a strong refrain into an even stronger climax. A good example is "Rejoice, the Lord is King" whose opening word is taken up in the refrain:

> Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,
> Rejoice, again, I say, Rejoice.
> (IV, 140)

We notice how this refrain is itself consolidated by the balanced phrases with their anaphora in the first line, and by the epanadiplosis in the second line. After five such refrains the poem is rounded off with a new couplet, which takes us from earth to heaven, an extended epanadiplosis:

> We soon shall hear th' archangel's Voice,
> The Trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.

So far we have looked at fairly straightforward examples of the basic types of repetition. Wesley, however, often works out a combination of such devices, extending them to other devices which have as yet been given no name. Here is an echo of Luther's comment on St. Paul, which meant so much in the conversions both of John and Charles Wesley. It shows not only the ringing of changes on me and my (traductio), and the powerful wrenching of the correct grammatical order of the words (anastrophe) in order to underline the marvel of God doing that for him; there is also a modified anaphora and a double epizeuxis:

> I felt my Lord's Atoning Blood
> Close to my Soul applied;
> Me, me he lov'd--the Son of God
> For me, for me he died!

Wesley's anaphora itself is frequently, we might almost say usually accompanied by a subtle change, not only in the word-music, but in the meaning also. It is not mere repetition, but repetition with a difference, or--as the Greeks and rhetoricians called it--antanaclasis. Here is an example combined with antistrophe. The last line of stanza 8 of "Christ The Lord is Ris'n Today" (I, 185-186) runs "Hid our Life with Christ in God!" Most of these words are repeated in the first line of the following stanza, "Hid; till Christ our Life appear." Not only is the sequence of words changed, however; a completely new meaning is given to the phrase "our life," which in the first instance has a human, in the second a divine, connotation. Many similar examples could be quoted where an echo is combined with slight change both in words and meaning, such as the following:

> All my Trust on Thee is stay'd;
> All my Help from Thee I bring.

Here the change is from passive to active, from rest to movement. Again:

> We all must own that God is True;
> We all may feel, that God is love.
> (III, 3-5)

Here the shift within the basic repetition is from universal compulsion to individual choice. This is a frequent sequence of thought with Wesley--"for all the world--and me!"

One very interesting feature of Wesley's repetitions is a progression by which several words of one line are taken up and extended in the following line, a process which is repeated--a kind of enlarged and extended anadiplosis.[15] Stanza 2 of "God of Unexampled Love" (III, 229) ends "Was never love like Thine!" This is taken up by the opening line of stanza 3 with the addition of the term "sorrow" and the amplification of "Thine":

> Never Love nor Sorrow was
>   Like that my Jesus show'd.

Often the patterns of repetition are interlaced in such a way that it is almost impossible to notice them all at a first reading, though all have their unrealized impact. A good example is furnished by the following stanza from "O Love Divine, How Sweet Thou Art" (IV, 341-342):

> Thy only Love do I require
> Nothing on Earth beneath desire,
>   Nothing in Heaven above:
> Let Earth and Heaven, and all Things go,
> Give me thine only Love to know,
>   Give me thine only Love.

The bold repetition of all but the last two words of the fifth line in the closing line strikes us immediately. We realize on examination that the whole stanza furnishes an example of epanadiplosis, the same phrase being used for the beginning and the end--with the slight variation of "thy" to "thine." Then we see that Charles Wesley has also contrived to give us an intermediate stage by using that same key phrase "thine only love" in the very middle of the penultimate line, just as it is at the beginning of the opening line and the closing of the last line. Then, perhaps, we notice the anaphora of "Nothing. . . Nothing," linked in turn with the antithetical "Earth beneath" and "Heaven above," which are then gathered together in one phrase: "Earth and Heaven." This latter device of accumulating single ideas for summarizing as a compound unity is paralleled by the more frequently employed reverse procedure--announcing the compound idea first and then taking each term singly for development. An example of this is provided in "Come On, My Partners in Distress" (V, 168-169), where the closing lines of the first stanza read:

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[15] For a discussion of this see G. H. Findlay, "A Study of Wesley Six-eights," London Quarterly and Holborn Review, CLXXX (July, 1955), 138-142.

> And look beyond that Vale of Tears
> To that celestial Hill.

The verb and the preposition are each taken up (in inverse order) and expanded in the opening lines of the following stanza:

> Beyond the bounds of Time, and Space
> Look forward to that Happy Place,
> The Saint's secure abode.

When Charles Wesley wants to emphasize the universality of Christ's Saviourhood, he keeps hammering the word "all" and the phrase "for all" into our minds, yet with all his insistence he contrives to vary his theme so skilfully that the reader or singer does not fully realize how his subconscious mind is being bombarded. In "Let Earth and Heaven Agree" (III, 71-73) stanza 6 introduces the theme quietly:

> For Me, and All mankind,
> The Lamb of God was slain . . .
> Loving to All, He none pass'd by . . .

(In passing we note that the "all" is implicit in the closing negative clause.) Stanza 7 closes on the same note:

> What Thou for all Mankind hast done!

Stanza 8 repeats the word "all" in the second syllable of each of the last three lines, but with a different word of introduction on each occasion:

> For this alone I breathe
>   To spread the Gospel-sound,
> Glad Tidings of Thy Death
>   To all the Nations round;
> Who All may feel Thy Blood applied,
> Since All are freely justified.

At last in stanza 9, before the quiet closing "Amen" of stanza 10, the full battery is brought into play, taking up the simple second syllable "all" in the second line (with a different introductory word), and letting it expand into an emphatic "for All" (introduced in stanza 7) at the end of the fourth line, and for good measure there is a two-fold repetition to open the last line:

> O for a Trumpet-voice,
>   On all the World to call,
> To bid their Hearts rejoice
>   In Him, who died for all!
> For All, my Lord was crucified,
> For All, for All my saviour died.

The devices of repetition crowd one upon another, and yet we feel no straining for effect (though half the last fifteen words consist of "for all").

Sometimes two words are thus woven into a pattern of repetition. In the third stanza of "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" (III, 333-334) Wesley has already played on the theme of "all," and this is continued and even intensified in the following stanza, with the addition of a twin theme, "take," introduced by an epanadiplosis on the preparatory word "claim"--the just demand that leads to the only adequate response. The marriage of the two key words as "take all" is hinted at or assumed throughout, though we never see the pair thus side by side:

If so poor a Worm as I
  May to thy great Glory live,
All my Actions sanctify,
  All my Words and Thoughts receive:
Claim me, for thy Service claim
All I have, and all I am.

Take my Soul and Body's Powers,
  Take my Mem'ry, Mind, and Will,
All my Goods, and all my Hours,
  All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my Heart--but make it new.

It is obvious that repetition was one of the chief means by which Charles Wesley achieved the powerful impact of the best of his verse. This also was one of the secrets of its continuity and cohesion. It is worthwhile to examine in detail the architecture both of stanza and of poem, bearing in mind the fact that repetition provides the basic mortar binding together the whole structure and its several components.

The contents of this chapter do not exhaust the poetical techniques of Charles Wesley; there are other elements of his style which are interesting. However, this brief examination of diction, metre, rhyme, structure, and repetition provides evidence of the fact that he was a poet of no mean ability, and that his hymns, far from being the simple affairs which many believe them to be, are the work of a craftsman.

CHAPTER IV

TYPES OF IMAGES

Although some facets of Charles Wesley's poetic skill have been studied extensively, his use of imagery as a poetic technique has gone relatively unnoticed. The present chapter is an attempt to classify his images and to point out some characteristics in his work which are related to them.

Counting images is a highly subjective process to say the least. In certain cases it may be possible to state definitely the nature of the image, but far more often there is some doubt as to the classification of the figure. In Wesley's work this problem is intensified, for many of his images are taken directly from the Bible. Are these to be tabulated or not? I have included them, but it is obvious that there is some difference between the imagistic force of these traditional biblical images and those which are original.

Certain generalizations can be made concerning Wesley's imagery. The study is based on 300 representative hymns containing a total of 7,740 lines. In Appendix B I have listed Wesley's images according to type. The total, 3,135, indicates that on the average Wesley used one image for every two lines he wrote. We find one hymn which has no image at all, "Ye simple Men of Heart sincere" (IV, 106), but another "Glory to God, and Praise, and Love" (I, 299-301) has at least twenty-eight images. Though Wesley in some hymns used little imagery, in others he relied heavily on the image as a poetic device.

Sheer weight of numbers is not, however, indicative of poetic excellence; on the contrary, an excessive number of images may result in an ornate construct of little artistic value. Consider the following hymn, "Eternal Beam of Light Divine" (I, 128). Long one of Wesley's most popular hymns, it is so burdened with images that it never frees itself for poetic flight:

> Eternal Beam of Light Divine,
>   Fountain of unexhausted Love,
> In whom the Father's Glories shine,
>   Thro' Earth beneath, and Heav'n above!
>
> JESU! the weary Wand'rer's Rest;
>   Give me thy easy Yoke to bear,
> With stedfast Patience arm my Breast,
>   With spotless Love and lowly Fear.
>
> Thankful I take the Cup from Thee,
>   Prepar'd and mingled by thy Skill;
> Tho' bitter to the Taste it be,
>   Pow'rful the wounded Soul to heal.
>
> Be Thou, O Rock of Ages, nigh;
>   So shall each murm'ring Thought be gone,
> And Grief, and Fear, and Care shall fly,
>   As clouds before the Mid-day sun.

Embedded in this hymn are at least twenty-four images and several general sense impressions. The work is, as a result, "jumpy" and uneven--or perhaps it would be more exact to say that it lacks unity. In any case it is evidence that neither Charles Wesley nor any other writer can build quality into a hymn by multiplying images.

Even though the hymn quoted above is not one of Wesley's better efforts, it does reveal his amazing ability to use a variety of images of different types. In Appendix B I have indicated the three major types of images which he used--comparative, general sense impressions, and non-comparative--giving the sub-divisions of each and the number of times each is used. For the sake of convenience and to facilitate orderly discussion of the images, I shall follow Appendix B closely, treating in order comparative images, general sense impressions, and non-comparative images. Not all types are of equal importance, of course, and I shall devote more space to those types which Wesley employed in a unique or unusual manner.

Metaphor is by far the most important form of comparative image which Wesley employs. Appendix B reveals that out of a total of 2,306 comparative images 1,809 are metaphors. The danger of statistical tabulation is evident in this particular case, for though Wesley used many metaphors, a majority of them are taken directly from the Bible. One of his most enduring hymns is a clear example of this tendency. "Soldiers of CHRIST arise" was written in 1742, and has been published in at least ten hymnals used for congregational singing. Although it is quite long, I shall quote the entire hymn, for it illustrates Wesley's tendency to sprinkle his hymns with metaphors (and other types of images) drawn directly from the Bible.

Soldiers of CHRIST, arise,
  And put your Armour on,
Strong in the Strength which GOD supplies
  Through his Eternal Son;
  Strong in the LORD of Hosts,
  And in his mighty Power,
Who in the Strength of JESUS trusts
  Is more than Conqueror.

  Stand then against your Foes,
  In close and firm Array,
Legions of wily Fiends oppose
  Throughout the Evil Day;
  But meet the Sons of Night,
  But mock their vain Design,
Arm'd in the Arms of Heavenly Light
  And Righteousness Divine.

Leave no Unguarded Place,
No Weakness of the Soul,
Take every Virtue, every Grace,
And fortify the Whole;
Indissolubly join'd,
To Battle all proceed,
But arm yourselves with all the Mind
That was in CHRIST your Head.

Let Truth the Girdle be
That binds your Armour on,
In Faithful firm Sincerity
To JESUS cleave alone;
Let Faith and Love combine
To guard your Valiant Breast,
The Plate be Righteousness Divine,
Imputed and Imprest.

Still let your Feet be shod,
Ready His Will to do,
Ready in all the Ways of GOD
His Glory to pursue:
Ruin is spread beneath,
The Gospel Greaves put on,
And safe thro' all the Snares of Death,
To Life eternal run.

But above all, lay hold
On FAITH's victorious Shield
Arm'd with that Adamant and Gold
Be sure to win the Field;
If Faith surround your Heart,
Satan shall be subdu'd
Repell'd his ev'ry Fiery Dart,
And quench'd with JESU's Blood.

JESUS hath died for You!
What can his Love withstand?
Believe; hold fast your Shield; and who
Shall pluck you from His Hand?
Believe that JESUS reigns,
All Power to Him is giv'n,
Believe, 'till freed from Sin's Remains
Believe yourselves to Heaven.

Your Rock can never shake:
Hither, He saith, come up!
The Helmet of Salvation take,
The Confidence of Hope:
Hope for his Perfect Love,
Hope for His People's Rest,

Hope to sit down with CHRIST above
And share the Marriage Feast.

Brandish in Faith 'till then
The Spirit's two-edg'd Sword,
Hew all the Snares of Fiends and Men
In Pieces with the Word;
'Tis WRITTEN: This applied
Baffles their Strength and Art;
Spirit and Soul with this divide,
And Joints and Marrow part.

To keep your Armour bright
Attend with constant Care,
Still walking in your Captain's Sight,
And watching unto Prayer;
Ready for all Alarms,
Stedfastly set your Face,
And always exercise your Arms,
And use your every Grace.

Pray, without ceasing pray,
(Your Captain gives the Word)
His Summons chearfully obey,
And call upon the LORD;
To God your every Want
In Instant Prayer display,
Pray always; pray, and never faint;
Pray, without ceasing Pray.

In Fellowship; alone
To GOD with Faith draw near,
Approach his Courts, besiege His Throne
With all the Power of Prayer:
Go to His Temple, go,
Nor from His Altar move;
Let every House His Worship know,
And every Heart His Love.

To GOD your Spirits dart,
Your Souls in Words declare,
Or groan, to Him who reads the Heart,
Th'unutterable Prayer.
His Mercy now implore,
And now shew forth His Praise,
In Shouts, or silent Awe adore
His Miracles of Grace.

Pour out your Souls to GOD,
  And bow them with your Knees,
And spread your Hearts and Hands abroad
  And pray for Sion's Peace;
  Your Guides and Brethren, bear
  For ever on your Mind;
Extend the Arms of mighty Prayer
  Ingrasping all mankind.

  From Strength to Strength go on,
  Wrestle, and fight, and pray,
Tread all the Powers of Darkness down,
  And win the well-fought Day;
  Still let the Spirit cry
  In all His Soldiers, 'Come'
Till CHRIST the LORD descends from High
  And takes the Conqu'rors Home.
(II, 323-324)

Wesley lifts from the sixth chapter of Ephesians the Apostle Paul's description of Christian virtues in terms of armour;[1] there is a separate metaphor for each item--the Plate of Righteousness, the Helmet of Salvation, etc. The hymn bristles with images of war. Christ is the "Captain," and the Christian is therefore a "Soldier." Life is a "Conflict," and the Christian must use his "Sword" and must protect himself from "ev'ry Fiery Dart" by means of "FAITH's victorious Shield." This extended image of warfare draws over thirty images from the Bible, and Wesley saw nothing but good in this.

In the third stanza the image is subtle, contained in one phrase, "Stand . . . in close and firm Array." From the arming of the individual Christian for battle, suddenly the picture is one of a closely-knit line of which the individual is a part. Another characteristic which Wesley manifests in his use of metaphor is quite evident in this poem. For better or worse, he shifts abruptly from one image to another. We may call this "mixed" metaphor, but Wesley saw nothing amiss in a series of metaphors, each reflecting a different facet of a subject. Actually this technique is termed "montage", and I shall treat it under non-comparative images. In stanza fifteen there is a gripping image of God which is not drawn from biblical sources: "Extend the arms of mighty Prayer/ Ingrasping all Mankind." Here is a vivid image of the mighty arms of prayer spreading wide enough to hold all men within their embrace. One more example of Wesley's originality in this poem may be noted. The warlike image reflects the struggle of regenerated man against the powers of evil. Satan is the enemy, and all the armour and weapons of the Christian are to be turned against _him_. Yet in stanza thirteen the image of battle suddenly takes on a new context, and _God_ is to be the object of the Christian's attack! The regenerate man is to approach the Courts of God--and "besiege His Throne."[2] This would seem to be the reverse of Donne's concept of the Christian besieged by a warrior God ("Batter my heart, Three-personed God").

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[1] "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6: 13-17)

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[2] The figure of man struggling with God occurs several times in Wesley's hymns. His best hymn, according to some, is "Come, O Thou Traveller unknown," though it is usually called "Wrestling Jacob." The extended metaphor is taken from the story of Jacob and his struggle with an angel (Genesis 32). Wesley transforms this historical event into an allegory by making man engage in a "battle" with God until it is revealed that the "enemy's" name is "Love" and that man must fight against God only to be conquered by Him.

More typical of Wesley's work than this long and rather complex hymn is the following:

And let our bodies part,
To different Climes repair,
Inseparably join'd in Heart
The Friends of JESUS are:
JESUS the Corner-Stone,
Did first our Souls unite;
And still He holds, and keeps us One,
Who walk with Him in White.

Then let us still proceed
In JESU's Work below,
And following our Triumphant Head,
To farther Conquests go;
The Vineyard of the LORD
Before his Labourers lies;
And lo! we see the vast Reward
That waits us in the Skies.

O let our Heart, and Mind
Continually ascend,
That Haven of Repose to find,
Where all our Labours end,
Where all our Grief is o'er,
Our Suffering, and our Pain:
Who meet on that eternal Shore
Shall never part again.

O happy, happy Place,
Where Saints and Angels meet!
There we shall see each others Face,
And all our Brethren greet,
The Church of the first-born,
We shall with them be blest,
And crown'd with endless Joy return
To our eternal Rest.

With Joy we shall behold
In yonder blest Abode,
The Patriarchs and Prophets old,
And all the Saints of GOD;
Abraham and *Isaac* there,
And *Jacob* shall receive
The Followers of their Faith and Prayer,
Who now in bodies live.

We shall our Time beneath
Live out in chearful Hope,
And fearless pass the Vale of Death,
And gain the Mountain-top;
To gather home his own
GOD shall his Angels send,
And bid our Bliss on Earth begun
In endless Triumphs end.
(V, 462-463)

This hymn abounds with traditional biblical images--Christ as the Corner-Stone, the Vineyard of the Lord, the Christian as a labourer, the Reward in the skies. In the first stanza, however, Wesley combines two metaphors so that the imagistic force is striking. The figure of life as a journey or walk is intensified by the last line, "Who walk with Him in White," for the symbol of purity which occurs so frequently in the Bible is an echo which calls to mind the question in Rev. 7:13: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?" The image is complex; there is a combination of the mystic union of the Church, the doctrine of purity, and the individual's journey through life.

We may conclude that Charles Wesley used many metaphors, but that only a few of these are likely to be original or at least striking in their imagistic quality.

Wesley employed simile much more infrequently, only 37 times in 300 hymns. However, it is evident that the same principle of quality may be applied to this figure as to metaphor. Wesley is capable at times of using this figure quite forcefully, but often the simile is so conventional that it has lost much of its imagistic force. God's love is "stronger than Death or Hell" (IV, 341), or it is "stronger than Sin or Death" (V, 363). The sinner is as far from God "as Hell from Heaven" (VII, 148), but he may "fly swift as the panting Hart" (111, 65) until he reaches God and his "Sins and Follies more/ Than Sands upon the Shore" (IV, 317) will be "as Silver tried." (IV, 317), and he shall be "Clean as e'en the Lord is clean" and "purified as He is pure" (IV, 317).

On rare occasions, however, Wesley produces a simile which is quite striking. The Christian when tired of the world may flee to the country and be "Calm as the hermit in his grot" where "As Adam in his native seat,/ in all his works my God I meet" (VIII, 179). The image in the following stanza is quite forceful:

> Lo! the heavenly Spirit towers,
>   Like Flames, o'er Nature's funeral Pyre,
> Triumphs in immortal Powers,
>   And claps his Wings of Fire.
> (VI, 94)

And there is pure poetry in this stanza:

> The Light of thy redeeming Love,
> Like Sun-Beams darting from above
>   Doth all my Sins display,
> Countless as dancing Motes, and small:
> But O! the Love that shews them all,
>   Shall chase them all away.
> (III, 168)

These lines are so well done that one can only regret that Wesley did not employ his talent on this particular type of imagery more often.

A very important type of comparative imagery which I would like to include in this chapter is quite difficult to analyze; for lack of a better term I have listed these images under the classification of *anthropologia*. The term is derived, of course, from *anthropomorphism* which refers to the practice of attributing human shape or characteristics to gods, animals, or objects. In Wesley's case, it is a natural thing, for his was a Christ-centered religion, and the distant Jehovah, the Father, appears far more infrequently than does Jesus Christ. One cannot avoid the conclusion that the practice of the early Methodists in focusing their worship on the human figure of Jesus rather than on the Father is a reaction against the Clockwork Deity on the Age of Reason. The simple people of Wesley's congregation were not prone to speculate on fine-spun theology; what they desired was a comforting God who was capable of understanding their needs both physical and spiritual. In any case, Wesley provided this focus in his hymns, for his images of God are often quite human. I do not refer to images relating to Christ; naturally his hymns abound with those, and Christ the Man lives before the reader in his humanity. This practice did not end with the Son in Wesley's hymns, for there are at least fifty-seven images which refer definitely to God the Father--the Spirit--and this Person of the Godhead by means of Wesley's use of anthropologia is quite human.

God "Comes down: he bows the sky." He is thus capable of physical action, and there are few bodily actions which God does not perform. He smiles, frowns, walks, shouts, looks, whispers, fights, kisses, gets up, sits down, comes down, and stoops. He has a physical appearance. We hear of the eye of God, the ear of God, the hand of God, the feet of God, and the lips of God. He is man-like in his emotions, for he is jealous, he hates, his anger burns, he yearns, and he is even lonely. The following stanza is typical of Wesley's use of this technique:

> For what you have done
> His Blood must atone;
> The Father hath punish'd for you his dear Son.

The Lord, in the day
Of his Anger, did lay
Our Sins on the Lamb; and he bore them away.
(IV, 371)

Obviously there are two figures in this stanza. Christ the Son becomes a Lamb, but the other figure must be the Father. The theology is straight out of the Epistles of St. Paul, but the image is as real as the mental impression of Jacob placing Isaac on the altar.

Man's relationship to God, then, often becomes quite physical. The highest goal of the Christian is to be in "God's Bosom," and the human may struggle against a heavenly Father just as a child struggles with his earthly father:

Oft, when He would not let me yield,
But stopt me by his Grace,
I rag'd from Sin to be with-held,
And burst from his Embrace.
(IV, 446)

It is unnecessary to multiply examples, for the method is clear. We may conclude that this device adds something to the texture of Wesley's hymns; it humanized the distant God of the Eighteenth Century, presented Him in a form more easily grasped.

Personification is used 133 times. Many of these are quite conventional, but at times Wesley achieves poetic excellence. It is interesting to compare his use of personification in his later hymns and in earlier writings. The following hymn was almost certainly written when he was on the verge of his brief and unhappy ministry in Georgia. This is not the place to discuss theological implications within the hymn, but during this period of Wesley's life both he and his brother were filled with the same desperate searching for spiritual release from life's doubts and darkness. The imagery of this poem reflects that melancholy, and Dr. George Osborn points out that in some editions the hymn was entitled "A Midnight Hymn for one under the Law," but that in the 5th edition it was altered to "A Midnight Hymn for one convinced of Sin."[3]

While Midnight Shades the Earth o'erspread,
  And veil the Bosom of the Deep,
Nature reclines her weary Head,
  And Care respires and Sorrows sleep:
My Soul still aims at Nobler Rest,
Aspiring to her Saviour's Breast.

Aid me, ye hov'ring Spirits near,
  Angels and Ministers of Grace;
Who ever, while you guard us here,
  Behold your Heav'nly Father's Face!
Gently my raptur'd Soul convey
To Regions of Eternal Day.

Fain would I leave this Earth below,
  Of Pain and Sin the dark Abode;
  Where shadowy Joy, or solid Woe
  Allures, or tears me from my God:
Doubtful and Insecure of Bliss,
Since Death alone confirms me His.[4]

Till then, to Sorrow born I sigh,
  And gasp, and languish after Home;
Upward I send my streaming Eye,
  Expecting till the Bridegroom come:
Come quickly, Lord! Thy own receive,
Now let me see thy face, and live.

Absent from Thee, my exil'd Soul
  Deep in a Fleshly Dungeon groans;
Around me Clouds of Darkness roll,
  And lab'ring Silence speaks my Moans:

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[3] See Poetical Works (I, 50).

[4] Ibid. Osborn mentions that John Wesley's emendations included changing the word Death to Faith; this changes the entire character of the hymn making it one of hope rather than doubt.

Come quickly, Lord! Thy Face display,
And look my Midnight into Day.

Error and Sin, and Death are O'er
  If Thou reverse the Creature's Doom;
Sad, Rachel weeps her Loss no more,
  If Thou the God, the Saviour Come:
Of Thee possest, in Thee we prove
The Light, the Life, the Heav'n of Love.
(I, 49-51)

Is this a hymn or a poem? It is so highly personal, the persona is so clearly identified with Charles Wesley that at first glance it seems to be lyric poetry; nevertheless, it is written in 6.8 metre (Wesley's favorite) and it has appeared in four hymn books used at various times in Methodist churches for congregational singing. We must assume, then, that it is a hymn despite its highly subjective qualities.

Looking only at Wesley's use of personification (though there are several other types of imagery in the hymn), we note that there are several examples in the first stanza alone. The Earth is a child-like figure, and "Midnight" becomes the mother who covers or "o'erspreads" the "child." The ocean is joined to this figure, for its "bosom" is also covered or veiled. Following this a procession of personifications appears: "Nature reclines her weary Head," "Care respires," and "Sorrows sleep." The entire stanza induces the thought of weariness, and Wesley relies on this series of personifications to convey a melancholy mood.

Stanza three is also gloomy, made so by other examples of personification. "Pain" and "Sin" become quite human in their "dark Abode," and they are joined by "shadowy Joy" and "solid Woe." The final line of this stanza climaxes the gloom of the speaker by the personification of "Death" who claims the victim.

Stanza five comes very close to personification. I have chosen to call the figure a metaphor, but the "exil'd Soul" assumes all the qualities of a human prisoner, and to some degree the metaphor flows into personification.

During his later career Wesley seldom used personification so profusely in a single hymn, choosing rather to employ isolated examples of this figure. He does, however, tend to use certain personifications with some degree of regularity, and I have classified these into seven categories.

The first of these categories includes personification of _time_, and it is possible to list these in order from the briefest duration to the longest period (italics mine):

"The fleeting _second_ takes his leave," (V, 118)
"Each _moment_ mourns the loss. . ." (VII, 213)
"The saddened _hours_ creep. . ."(III, 79)
"Hail the _Day_ that sees Him rise," (I, 187)
"Each _Month_ will tell us of our loss," (VII, 9)
"The ancient _Years_ will speak. . ." (XII, 315)
"_Centuries_ grow old, and fail. . ." (XI, 47)
"The _Age_ has ceased to mourn." (XI, 311)
"_Eternity_ has bowed her head. . ."(II, 162)

A second type of personification which Wesley frequently draws upon is geography, primarily earth or nations.

> Sing, ye ransom'd Nations, sing,
> Praises to our New-born King.
> (IV, 117)

And loud his Infant-cries proclaim
A Peace 'twixt Earth and Heaven.
(IV, 115)

At least sixteen times Wesley employs this type of personification in lines such as "Abject Earth/ sees his birth " (I, 107), "Bow the Whole Earth to his sway" (IV, 125), "Christ Proclaims a Peace 'twixt Heaven and Earth" (II, 169), and "Let Heaven and Earth agree" (III, 71).

Quite often Wesley personifies *death* or some aspect of it. "Death has now destroyed his soul" (III, 25) is typical of this method. The natural man is "A Child of Wrath and Hell" (I, 91), and he will feel not only "The sting of Death" (I, 128) but also the "grip of Sin" (VIII, 67). "The Grave will ope his jaws" (XII, 146) and "Swallow up" (IV, 318) the unrepentant. Most of these personifications are drawn directly from the Bible. There is one unusual example of personification which is closely allied to sin in the following stanza:

Listed into the Cause of Sin,
  Why should a Good be Evil?
Musick, alas! too long has been
  Prest to obey the Devil:
Drunken, or lewd, or light the Lay
  Flow'd to the Soul's undoing,
Widen'd, and strew'd with Flowers the Way
  Drawn to Eternal Ruin.
(V, 397)

The background of this hymn is fascinating;[5] and the personification in the stanza is also interesting. Music is the subject, and Wesley personifies this art in the form of a sailor. It is useless to speculate on whether or not Wesley had personal experience with the naval practices of the day. In all probability he did, but in any case the picture here is one of an individual who is "Listed" or "Prest" (impressed) into the service of evil against his will just as men were forced to enter naval service whether they would or no. Wesley insists that music is good and should be "Listed" or "Prest" into the service of God; this is probably Wesley's clearest statement (in his poetic work) of his concept of the place of song in the Methodist Movement.

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[5] The tune is the same as "Here we go round the mulberry bush." John Kirk writing in 1859 (*Charles Wesley, the Poet of Methodism*, pp. 44-46) reported a tradition that Charles Wesley was interrupted during an open-air service by a group of drunken sailors singing "Nancy Dawson," a lewd song with this tune. Charles Wesley mastered the metre, and at the following service got the people to sing this hymn to the sailor's tune.
Frank Baker points out in *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*

Certain aspects of nature are often personified; twenty-seven examples of this are included in the total. We find frequent use of nature itself being personified: "Nature in Convulsion lies" (III, 229), "guilty Nature" (I, 299), and "Nature hath acknowledg'd thy Birth" (IV, 125). Often some aspect of physical nature is employed:

> The Waves of the Sea Have lift up their voice,
> Sore troubled that we in JESUS rejoice:
> The Floods they are roaring, but JESUS is here
> While we are adoring, He always is near.

(London, 1962) that there was a dancer by the name of Nancy Dawson about whom George Alexander Stevens composed a "Ballad of Nancy Dawson," but she did not do her horn-pipe in Gay's Beggar's Opera at the Covent Garden Theatre until 1759. Baker states that toward the end of the 17th century another Nancy Dawson kept a house of ill fame at Portsmouth, and that there was a song which the sailors sang about her. "Could the arm of coincidence," he speculates, "stretch far enough for the song about the Portsmouth Nancy Dawson to be to the same tune later made more respectable, not only by Charles Wesley, but by the danger of that name?" (p. 117)

Men, Devils engage, the Billows arise,
And horrible rage, and threaten the Skies:
Their Fury shall never Our Stedfastness shock,
The weakest Believer Is built on a Rock.
(IV, 123)

In this instance Wesley achieves violent action by using nature's more destructive aspects, but just as often he inserts a gentle note into his hymns by means of a more sedate or placid personification, such as "See the Day-spring from afar/ Usher'd by the Morning-Star" (I, 158).

Moral qualities or emotions are used twenty-six times. Sometimes these appear singly, but more often Wesley places them in pairs or even in series: "There sighing Grief shall weep no more,/ And Sin shall never enter there" (IV, 302), "Envy and Malice shall die,/ And Discord afflict us no more" (IV, 125). In "Sinners, obey the Gospel-Word" (V, 63), he includes personification in practically every line of two stanzas:

The Godly Grief, the Pleasing Smart,
The Meltings of a broken Heart,
The Tears that speak your Sins forgiv'n,
The Sighs that waft your Soul to Heav'n.

The guiltless Shame, the sweet Distress,
Th' unutterable Tenderness,
The genuine meek Humility,
The Wonder, why such Love to me!

Some of these may be border-line cases, but "Tears that speak" is certainly personification.

In the following hymn we find evidence that in his later career Wesley did employ the technique which he practiced quite often in his early life--allowing personification to dominate a hymn:

Happy the Man, who finds the Grace,
The Blessing of God's Chosen Race,
The Wisdom coming from above,
The Faith that sweetly works by Love.

Happy beyond Description He
Who knows The Saviour died for me,
The Gift unspeakable obtains,
And Heav'nly Understanding gains.

Wisdom Divine! Who tells the Price
Of Wisdom's costly Merchandize?
Wisdom to Silver we prefer,
And Gold is Dross, compar'd to her.

Better she is than richest Mines,
All earthly Treasures she outshines,
Her Value above Rubies is,
And precious Pearls are vile to This.

Whate'er thy Heart can wish is Poor
To Wisdom's all-sufficient Store:
Pleasure, and Fame, and Health, and Friends,
She all created Good transcends.

Her Hands are fill'd with Length of Days,
True riches, and Immortal Praise,
Riches of CHRIST on All bestow'd,
And Honour, that descends from God.

To purest Joys She all invites,
Chaste, holy, spiritual Delights:
Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness,
And all her flowery Paths are Peace.

He finds, who Wisdom apprehends,
A Life begun that never ends,
The Tree of Life Divine She is,
Set in the midst of Paradise.

Happy the Man who Wisdom gains,
Thrice happy who his Guest retains,
He owns, and shall for ever own
Wisdom, and CHRIST, and Heaven are One.
(IV, 234-235)

The personification of wisdom as a woman clearly controls the structure of the hymn, but Wesley frequently allows the figure to get out of control. In stanza three "Wisdom" is a peddler of some sort offering "costly Merchandize," but in the last half of this stanza and in stanza four the figure abruptly changes to mining, and in stanza eight "Wisdom" becomes a "Tree of Life. . . Set in the midst of Paradise," only to become a "guest" in the final stanza. Whether this is "mixed metaphor" or "mixed personification" I am unable to say, but it reveals once again that which I have already pointed out: Charles Wesley allows his images to overflow and blend with one another, making it almost impossible to place them in a specific classification.

One interesting use of personification which Wesley employed quite often is evident in his imagery on the blood of Christ. "The Blood of Sprinkling speaks and dies" (III, 301), "His Blood declares us his" (V, 363), "He hears thy Blood for mercy cry" (IV, 157), and "Hear the Blood speak,/ that hath answered for me" (IV, 371) are typical of this type of personification. There are seventeen instances of this and four others which are closely related, such as "Those wounds which all my sorrows heal" (VIII, 17). There is an interesting paradox in this latter example, for we note that the healing for the sinner's "wounds" is found only in the wounds of Christ.

The seventh and final classification Wesley often employed in his use of personification draws upon catastrophe. Twenty-one times he personifies such events as plagues or storms. In the following stanza he uses four in series:

> Thy Tokens we with Joy confess,
> The War proclaims the Prince of Peace,
> The Earthquake speaks thy Power,
> The Famine all thy Fulness brings,
> The Plague presents thy healing Wings,
> And Nature's final hour.
> (VI, 95)

In this particular case there is no doubt but that Wesley's imagery is

drawn from

drawn from current events,[6] and it is interesting to note that he interprets these terrible events as signs of God's existence.

Logically all of Wesley's images can be divided into comparative and non-comparative images; however, general sense impressions are such a vital facet of his poetic technique that I have classified them separately in Appendix B. They are of course, non-comparative, just as are the other images in the classification which are listed under "non-comparative images," but there is a difference between the two groups. Those images which are classified as non-comparative are usually found in a rather "fixed" structure, while sense impressions are quite nebulous and often difficult to recognize and classify. I have chosen to discuss the general sense impressions first, reserving the last section of this chapter for the rather lengthy analysis of other non-comparative imagery.

Of the 623 images which are included in general sense impressions the most important (though not the most numerous) are those images which employ light and darkness. There are at least eighty-seven of these, and many other references could be included by enlarging the principle of classification. By far the most significant use of this type of imagery is the symbolism which takes light as a symbol for purity or goodness and darkness as a symbol for evil. In "CHRIST, whose Glory fills the Skies (I, 224-225) we can see that Wesley used this imagery as a dominant or running image:

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[6] This hymn first appeared in Hymns for the Year 1756. There had been hostilities between England and France in America, and an actual French invasion of England was feared. The terrible earthquake occured at Lisbon on November 1755, and a severe cattle plague was raging in Britain and western Europe. It was against this background that Wesley wrote this hymn.

CHRIST, Whose Glory fills the Skies
  CHRIST, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise,
  Triumph o'er the Shades of Night:
Day-spring from on High, be near:
Day-star, in my Heart appear.

Dark and Chearless is the Morn
  Unaccompanied by Thee,
Joyless is the Day's Return,
  Till thy Mercy's Beams I see;
Till thy Inward Light impart,
Glad my Eyes, and warm my Heart.

Visit then this Soul of mine,
  Pierce the Gloom of Sin and Grief,
Fill me, Radiancy Divine,
  Scatter all my Unbelief,
More and more Thyself display
Shining to the Perfect Day.

The first stanza is filled with light; the skies are blazing as Christ "fills the Skies," and the reference to Christ as "Light," "Sun of Righteousness," "Day-spring," and "Day-star" contributes to the brightness of the stanza. Stanza two strikes with tremendous force for it is as dark as the first stanza is light. The gloomy darkness of human life without Christ is effectively presented in the first three lines, but is relieved by the hope expressed in the final three lines that the light will "Glad my Eyes, and warm my Heart." The final stanza completes the total image by a definite prayer that heavenly light will "Pierce the Gloom of Sin" and that human darkness will be dispersed by divine radiance.

Another very fine hymn which follows this same general pattern is "Stupendous height of heavenly love" (XI, 114-115):

Stupendous height of heavenly love,
  Of pitying tenderness Divine!
It brought the Saviour from above,
  It caus'd the Springing Day to shine,
The Sun of righteousness t' appear,
And gild our gloomy hemisphere.

God did in Christ himself reveal
  To chase our darkness by his light,
Our sin and ignorance dispel,
  Direct our wand'ring feet aright,
And bring our souls with pardon blest
To realms of everlasting rest.

Come then, O Lord, the light impart,
  The faith that bids our terrors cease,
Into thy love direct my heart,
  Into thy way of perfect peace,
And chear my soul of death afraid,
And guide me thro' the dreadful shade.

Answer thy mercy's whole design,
  My God incarnated for me,
My spirit make thy radiant shrine,
  My Light and full Salvation be,
And thro' the dreary vale unknown
Conduct me to thy dazling throne.

Light-darkness controls this hymn as it does at least fourteen out of the 300 used for this study, and there are many single images of darkness or light scattered liberally throughout the canon of Charles Wesley. There is certainly nothing original in Christ as "Sun of righteousness," but there is an imagistic force in the lines "The Sun of righteousness t'appear,/ And gild our gloomy hemisphere."

I have included in these light-darkness images those which refer to fire, and there are many of these. I quote only two, but fire was a favorite symbol for Wesley. In Hymns of Intercession he threatened the Turks in one hymn, through light-darkness imagery:

Sun of unclouded Righteousness,
  With healing in Thy wings arise,
A sad benighted world to bless,

Which now in sin and error lies,
Wrapped in Egyptian night profound,
With chains of hellish darkness bound.

The smoke of the infernal cave,
  Which half the Christian world o'erspread,
Disperse, Thou heavenly Light, and save
  The souls by that imposter led
That Arab-thief, as Satan bold,
Who quite destroy'd Thine Asian fold
(I, 238)

The rest of the hymn employs little imagery but these first two stanzas are effective insofar as light-darkness imagery is concerned. The "smoke of the infernal cave" is one of the few references which Charles Wesley makes to Hell, but it is powerful, for he states that its smoke has covered half the world, blotting out the sun of righteousness and the light of truth. In another hymn Wesley speaks of the power of Hell to darken Heaven:

O All-embracing Love Divine
  O All-illuminating Light,
Throughout the World victorious shine
  Victorious o'er the Shades of Night.

The Smoak that issues from the Pit,
  And darkens Heavens All-chearing Face,
Scatter; & Bruise beneath our Feet
  The bold Blasphemer of Thy Grace.
(VI, 231)

The second stanza is quite vivid, made so perhaps by the personification of Heaven whose "all-chearing Face" is darkened by the smoke boiling up out of the Pit.

Wesley often includes a single stanza which contains imagery related to blindness or the lack of light:

A poor, blind Child I wander here
If haply I may feel Thee near,
O dark, dark, dark (I still must say)

Amidst the Blaze of Gospel-Day
(II, 258)

The repetition of "dark, dark, dark" (with its Miltonic echo) offers a striking contrast to the last line, and the phrase "the Blaze of Gospel-Day" is quite typical of Wesley's habit of presenting human nature in terms of darkness, and then closing with an image of light. We find this same technique in the following lines:

Light of those whose dreary Dwelling
  Borders on the Shades of Death,
Come, and by thy Love's revealing
  Dissipate the Clouds beneath;
The new Heaven and Earth's Creator,
  In our deepest Darkness rise,
Scattering all the Night of Nature,
  Pouring Eye-sight on our Eyes.

In contrast to this method of presenting darkness first and then cancelling it with an image of light, the following stanza begins in light and ends in darkness:

Come then, O Lord, the light impart,
  The faith that bids our terrors cease,
Into thy love direct my heart,
  Into thy way of perfect peace,
And chear my soul of death afraid,
And guide me thro' the dreadful shade.
(XI, 114)

This is quite unusual, however, for Wesley likes to end on a note of brightness:

Expand Thy Winds, Prolific Dove,
  Brood o'er our Nature's Night:
On our disorder'd Spirits move,
  And let there now be Light.

Many of these images might be called comparative; some of them are clearly metaphor or other types of comparative imagery. However, since Wesley tends to use so many references to light and darkness--in entire hymns, stanzas, and single lines--I have grouped them all under the heading of light-darkness imagery. The texture of his work is controlled by these images to a great extent, and light-darkness sense impressions are an organic facet of his structure. Almost every hymn has some touch of this; we can find references to "sunk in night," "dark the night," "Beam of Light," "Glories shine," "shadows," "shade," and a multitude of other words or expressions which have the connotation if not the denotation of light-darkness; thus the number of images drawn from agencies of light is quite large. Wesley's use of light-darkness imagery is so inextricably tied in with comparative imagery and with conventional imagery drawn directly from the Bible and other sources that to separate this classification into a type of imagery with sharp, definite boundaries is quite impossible. It is evident that Wesley relied on this light-darkness imagery to a considerable degree, but the lines are difficult to draw.

I have listed forty-two instances of color under general sense impressions, but when this figure is broken down it becomes apparent that Wesley wrote in black-and-white, not color. There is the reference to "green pastures" (IX, 281) and one to "yon azure sky" (IV, 127), but apart from these Charles Wesley saw only four colors--white, black, red, and gold. There are nine references to white (which could have been included under light-darkness sense impressions) such as "Wash the Ethiop white," "White stone," "Walk in white," and "flows the word in milky rills." There are twelve references to gold, including "Golden wings," "golden blaze," and "golden dawn." There is no question about Wesley's use of the color red, for the nineteen images using this all refer to the blood of Christ. I have not included his use of "blood" or "bloody" under color, but only those references which specify some shade--red, crimson, and purple. The most vivid example of Charles Wesley's use of color is the combination of hyperbole with the blood of Christ. Seven times he uses this method in phrases such as "purple tide," "purple current," and "purple sea." There was, in Wesley's day, no objection to expressions of blood, though in our own time hymns with expressions such as "Are ye washed in the blood of the Lamb" have been removed from many hymnals.

It is tempting to imply from Wesley's use of color (black or white) that his work reflects the moral tone of the Methodist movement, and it is also tempting to insist that his refusal to employ the vivid colors so frequently used by secular poets reflects the sombre tone of the sour-faced Puritan so often caricatured by writers of the eighteenth century. Neither of these assumptions necessarily is true, though a good case might be made for the first. I am unable to account for Wesley's tendency to ignore color, but it is obvious that his hymns are not gloomy; they may begin on a dismal note, but inevitably they end on a joyful tone. All that one may say is that Wesley chose to ignore color for the most part as a literary device.

Among the general sense impressions listed in Appendix B there are 266 which appeal to the vision. This type of non-comparative imagery is almost impossible to isolate and label in Wesley's hymns, for his use of this device is highly varied. Quite often he inserts a sharp, vivid picture in words within the framework of other images. In "Ye Servants of GOD, Your Master proclaim," for example, there is a combination of anthropologia which shades over into a visual sense impression:

> Salvation to GOD Who sits on the Throne!
> Let all cry aloud, And honour the SON!
> Our JESUS's Praises The Angels proclaim,
> Fall down on their Faces, And worship the Lamb.
> (IV, 51)

Wesley lifts a scene out of the Bible. There is a God in human form who sits on a throne; Jesus is present, the angels are in attendance, and the entire stanza turns on the response of the Angels who "Fall down on their Faces." This picture of a physical act is not comparative; it does relate to the concept of God in human form, and it does present a visual image.

In another hymn Wesley relies on parable (or perhaps allegory) to achieve a sense of immediacy:

> Thee, O my GOD and King,
> My Father, Thee I sing!
> Hear well-please'd the joyous Sound,
> Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
> Lost, I now in CHRIST am found,
> Dead, by Faith in CHRIST I live.
> (I, 96)
>
> Father, behold thy Son,
> In CHRIST I am thy own.
> Stranger long to Thee and Rest,
> See the Prodigal is come:
> Open wide thine Arms and Breast,
> Take the weary Wand'rer home.

The key line of the entire hymn is "See the Prodigal is come." But is this to be called metaphor--man is a prodigal? Or is the hymn itself in the form of a parable? The next stanza employs the use of anthropologia, presenting God in the form of an anxious earthly father:

> Thine Eye observ'd from far,
> Thy Pity look'd me near:
> Me thy Bowels yearn'd to see,
> Me thy Mercy ran to find,
> Empty, poor, and void of Thee,
> Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind.

Then the impression of a human father is strengthened in stanza four:

> Thou on my Neck didst fall,
> Thy Kiss forgave me all:
> Still the gracious Words I hear,
> Words that made the Saviour mine,
> Haste, for Him the Robe prepare,
> His be Righteousness Divine!

While there may be great difficulty in affixing a label to the imagery used in this hymn, the impact is basically visual. Christ used the parable to give men a clearer concept of the nature of God, and Wesley adopts the method to his own form of art. The scene is quite clear: the wayward boy is observed by the anxious father; this is followed by the emotional reconciliation scene where the two embrace. This may appear to be a relatively unsophisticated form of theology, but it presented to Wesley's congregation the basic doctrine of the Methodist Movement by means of visual sense impressions.

Wesley's use of the word "see" as an imperative is indicative of his method. In Appendix A five hymns are listed which begin with this word, and at least eighty-two of the hymns used as the basis of this study contain some form of this imperative. "Let us see thy Great Salvation" (IV, 219), "Go see the King of Glory" (IV, 110), "See the Eternal Son of God" (IV, 108), "Lift up your eyes" (IV, 213)

"See His glorious Face"(IV, 119), "Behold the Son of God" (III, 312), and "Let us then with Angels gaze/ On our new Born Monarch's face" (V, 39) are typical of the method by which Wesley attempts to create a "seeing" attitude within the reader.

In Wesley's Nativity Hymns (1745) several occurrences of this are obvious. These hymns are relatively free of specific types of images, such as metaphor and simile, for Wesley chooses to relate the physical action in dramatic form. Later in this chapter I shall discuss in detail this method, but we can see in the following hymn the technique of using bodily action to create a visual impression:

Glory be to GOD on high,
  And Peace on Earth descend;
God comes down: He bows the Sky:
  He shews himself our Friend!
God th' Invisible appears,
  God the Blest, the Great I AM
Sojourns in this Vale of Tears,
  And JESUS is his Name.

Him the Angels all ador'd
  Their Maker and their King:
Tidings of their Humbled Lord,
  They now to Mortals bring:
Emptied of his Majesty,
  Of His dazling Glories shorn,
Beings Source begins to be,
  And God himself is BORN!

See th' eternal Son of God
  A Mortal Son of Man,
Dwelling in an Earthy Clod
  Whom Heaven cannot contain!
Stand amaz'd ye Heavens at This!
  See the Lord of Earth and Skies
Humbled to the Dust He is,
  And in a Manger lies!

We the sons of Men rejoice,
  The Prince of Peace proclaim,
With Heaven's Host lift up our Voice,
  And shout Immanuel's name;

> Knees and Hearts to Him we bow;
> Of our Flesh, and of our Bone
> JESUS is our Brother now,
> And God is All our own!
> (IV, 108-109)

Stanza one throws out a paradox: "God th' Invisible appears," and the hymn is controlled by Wesley's effort to show this phenomena. In the second stanza there is the unique image of a haircut in which Christ is "Of his dazling Glories shorn" as He leaves heaven for earth, then in the last of this stanza Christ puts himself in a position so that men can actually see Him: "Beings Source begins to Be,/ And God himself is BORN!" The third stanza is the center of the hymn; it is here that Wesley in effect simply points to the child in the manger, insisting that the reader look: "See th' Eternal Son of God . . . Stand amazed . . . See the Lord of Earth and Skies," and the imperative is made quite clear by the use of exclamation marks--ecphonesis, to use the rhetorician's term. Appropriately enough the hymn closes with sound; now that men have seen they should "shout Immanuel's Name," but the final visual image is kneeling, both figuratively and literally.

In another of the Nativity Hymns this "visual" method is even more vivid:

> Let Earth and Heaven combine,
> Angels and Men agree
> To praise in Songs divine
> Th' Incarnate Deity,
> Our God contracted to a Span,
> Incomprehensibly made Man.
> (IV, 109)

Here is the paradox; Wesley then gives us a picture of Christ leaving Heaven:

He laid his Glory by,
  He wrap'd Him in our Clay,
Unmark'd by Human Eye
  The latent Godhead lay;
Infant of Days He here became,
And Bore the lov'd IMMANUEL's Name.

Christ's departure may have been "Unmark'd by Human Eye," but the first part of the stanza is a realistic description (despite the rather strange metaphor "clay") of a man changing clothes. Then, quite predictably, in the next stanza Wesley insists that we see:

See in that Infant's Face
  The Depths of Deity,
And labour while ye gaze
  To sound the Mystery:
In vain; ye Angels gaze no more,
But fall, and silently adore.

The next two stanzas insist that the mystery is too much for men or angels, but in the final stanza we are once again told something about "seeing," for not only in this world is Christ to be "seen," but in eternity:

Made perfect first in Love,
  And sanctified by Grace,
We shall from Earth remove,
  And see his glorious Face;
His Love shall then be fully shew'd,
And Man shall then be lost in God.
(IV, 109-110)

Wesley was also prone to simply point at the figure of Christ on the cross and ask that his audience see the picture before their eyes:

Never Love nor Sorrow was
  Like that my JESUS show'd;
See Him stretch'd on yonder Cross
  And crush'd beneath our Load!
Now discern the Deity,
  Now his heavenly Birth declare!

Faith cries out 'Tis He, 'tis He,
  My God that suffers there!
(III, 229)

And:

Look unto Him, ye Nations, own
  Your God, ye fallen Race!
Look, and be sav'd, thro' Faith alone;
  Be justified, by Grace!

See all your Sins on JESUS laid;
  The Lamb of God was slain,
His Soul was once an Offering made
  For _every Soul of Man_
(IV, 221)

Most immediate of all Wesley's hymns insofar as visual impressions of the crucifixion are concerned is the following:

  O Love Unknown!
  God's Only Son,
All Earth and Heaven's Desire
  Leaves for me his glorious Throne,
Doth for me expire.

  See, Sinners, see
  He dies for me,
For You his Life He pours!
  Blessings rain from yonder Tree
In eternal Showers.

  Come catch the Blood,
  And Life of God,
And lose your guilty Fears,
  Rise, releas'd from all your Load,
JESUS' Cross appears!

  Break Hearts of Stone
  To hear Him groan,
To hear his Dying Prayer,
  Father, look with Pity down,
And my Murtherers spare.

  He prays, and cries!
  He bleeds, and dies!
Appeas'd by sacred Gore
  GOD accepts his Sacrifice,
Man is Curst no more.

O matchless Grace!
The Prince of Peace
Th' Immortal King of Heav'n
Suffers in his Murtherers Place
And we are all forgiven.
(V, 58-59)

There are other images in this hymn which can be identified, but primarily the visual image of Christ's death is the most important.

Wesley not only attempted to create mental pictures of the manger and the cross, but also of the Second Coming of Christ. One of his most famous hymns is filled with visual sense impressions:

Lo! He comes with clouds discending,
Once for favour'd sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending,
Swell the triumph of his train:
Hallelujah,
God appears on earth to reign!

Every eye shall now behold Him
Rob'd in dreadful majesty,
Those who set at nought and sold Him,
Pierc'd, and nail'd Him to the tree,
Deeply wailing
Shall the true Messiah see.

The dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransom'd worshippers;
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore Thee
High on thine eternal throne
Saviour, take the power and glory
Claim the kingdom for thine own:
JAH, JEHOVAH,
Everlasting God, come down.
(VI, 143-144)

The hymn begins with "Lo!" meaning "look!" and the first stanza throws a host before our eyes. The second stanza begins by the statement that "Every eye shall now behold Him," followed by a literal description of Christ's suffering which has a great visual appeal--"Pierc'd, and nail'd Him to the tree." The third stanza continues the series of visual impressions by means of the epithet "dazling" and by the verb "gaze."

Most of the examples given above have not been basically comparative, for as I have indicated, Wesley tends to add visual effects to his figures of speech. There are, however, numerous examples of single words or lines which are not connected to other types of images. Usually visual impressions are closely connected with space or bodily movement. "Dark and Chearless is the morn," for example, creates a picture of gloom. Christ comes "with clouds discending" or from "on high." We are to "look up," or to "arise," and the Christian must "stand fast," "lift his Heart to Heaven," or he will "sink, and faint, and fall." This type of general visual impression is quite common in Wesley's hymns, but usually does not have the force of visual impressions which are organically united with other types of imagery.

In striking contrast to Wesley's visual impressions, his references to the sense of smell are almost non-existent. There are only eight listed in Appendix B, and all of these but one are suspect. He refers once to "the foulest Offender " (VIII, 23), but this is not a direct impression as far as smell is concerned. There are several references to eating such as "He doth his Servants feed/ with Manna from above," but these have little if any imagistic force. Once he refers to "The smoak that issues from the pit"(IV, 123), and though smoke has odor, in context the image here is visual rather than olfactory. Referring to the "smoak" of sacrifices, Wesley says "The offering smoaks thro' Earth and skies" (III, 301) and speaks of the "Smoke of thy Atonement here." Once again, these are not very forceful olfactory impressions. There is one stanza which could be legitimately placed in the category of sense impressions of smell:

> He still respects thy Sacrifice,
>   It's Savour Sweet doth always please,
> The Offering smoaks thro' Earth and Skies,
>   Diffusing Life and Joy and Peace,
> To these thy lower Courts it comes,
> And fills them with Divine Purfumes.
> (III, 301)

Even this is not particularly good, but it is as close as Wesley comes to writing lines which impress the sense of smell.

The next category of general sense impressions includes those expressions which arouse some response of the taste buds. There are forty-two of these, but though there are more references to taste than to smell, Wesley is only slightly more successful with this type of impressionism. For the most part he chooses simply to mention an abstract quality which is vaguely connected with the sense of taste, such as:

> Where is the Blessedness bestow'd
>   On All that hunger after Thee?
> I hunger now, I thirst for God!
> (I, 128)

No matter how many exclamation marks Wesley chooses to insert after this last line, the mere mention of hunger or thirst does not stimulate the sense of taste. He tries again:

He dispels our Sin and Sadness,
  Life imparts,
  Chears our Hearts,
Fills with Food and Gladness.
Who himself for all hath given
  Us he feeds,
  Us he leads
To a Feast in Heaven.
(III, 367)

This "Feast in Heaven" is so metaphysical that there is no connection between the words and the sensations of the individual. Wesley is speaking of spiritual food, and it is possible that he may stir the spiritual hunger of someone, but the juices do not flow when one reads the line. In another stanza he adds the element of thirst, but with no more success:

Shouldst Thou o'er the Desart Lead,
  Will me farther Griefs to know,
After Thee with steady Tread
  Leaning on thy Love I'd go,
Drinking the Fountain from above,
Eat the Manna of thy Love.
(III, 167)

The imagery of this stanza is derived primarily from the Bible--the "Fountain" and the "Manna." In his hymns Wesley frequently draws upon biblical images, and it seems likely that he sought not so much to display his ability to create forceful images as to communicate doctrine. In the following hymn, for example, there is no attempt to stimulate a physical sense of taste; instead there are several echoes from the Bible which served to remind the congregation that the Lord's Supper was an act of worship. John Keats attempted to stimulate the taste buds with his "candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd," but Wesley chose to avoid this appeal to the senses in speaking of the Lord's Supper.

JESU, we Thus obey
Thy last and kindest Word,
Here in thine own Appointed Way
We come to meet our Lord:
The Way Thou hast Injoin'd
Thou wilt therein appear:
We come with Confidence to find
Thy special Presence here.

Our Hearts we open wide
To make the Saviour room:
And lo! The Lamb, the Crucified,
The Sinner's Friend is come.
His Presence makes the Feast,
And now our Bosoms feel
The Glory not to be exprest,
The Joy unspeakable.

With pure celestial Bliss
He doth our Spirits chear,
His House of Banquetting is This,
And He hath brought us here:
He doth his Servants feed
With Manna from above,
His Banner over us is spread,
His everlasting love.

He bids us drink and eat
Imperishable Food,
He gives his Flesh to be our Meat
And bids us drink his Blood:
Whate'er th' Almighty Can
To Pardon'd sinners give,
The Fulness of our God made Man
We here with Christ receive.
(III, 273-274)

The first two stanzas are completely void of any reference to eating, and the last two are so vague that there is little imagistic force. In the following hymn eight out of the twelve stanzas contain some reference to eating, but none have any vital effect on the taste:

Ah tell us no more
The Spirit and Power
Of JESUS our God
Is not to be found in this Life-giving Food!

Did JESUS ordain
His Supper in vain,
And furnish a Feast
For none but his earliest Servants to taste?

Nay, but this is his Will
(We know it and feel)
That we should partake
The Banquet for All He so freely did make.

In rapturous Bliss
He bids us do This,
The Joy it imparts
Hath witness'd his gracious Design in our Hearts.

'Tis God we believe,
Who cannot deceive,
The Witness of God
Is Present, and speaks in the Mystical Blood.

Receiving the Bread
On JESUS we feed,
It doth not appear
His Manner of working; but JESUS is here!

With Bread from above,
With Comfort and Love
Our Spirit he fills,
And all his unspeakable Goodness reveals.

O that all Men would haste
To the Spiritual Feast,
At JESUS's Word
Do This, and be fed with the Love of our Lord!

True Light of Mankind
Shine into their Mind,
And clearly reveal
Thy perfect and good and acceptable Will.

Bring near the glad day
When all shall obey
Thy dying Request,
And eat of thy Supper, and lean on thy Breast.

To all Men impart
One Way and one Heart,
Thy People be shown
All righteous and sinless and perfect in One.

Then, then let us see
Thy Glory, and be
Caught up in the Air
This Heavenly Supper in Heaven to share.
(III, 282-283)

But this "Heavenly Supper" is pretty dry; there is no taste to it, and the effect on the senses is slight. It is not that these are not good hymns, for as Rattenbury insists, "Charles Wesley published in his lifetime hymn-books of varying excellence, but from the theological point of view, notwithstanding the brilliance of the hymns of God's Everlasting Love, none is as rich and as deep as the hymns on the Lord's supper."[7] The Hymns on the Lord's Supper simply do not have, however, the passion and the fire which Wesley puts into his hymns on the death of Christ and the love of God. The point is not whether these are good or bad hymns; the significant thing as far as this study is concerned is that Wesley failed to use images that appeal strongly to the sense of taste.

Could he have done so, or is this a flaw in Wesley which he could not mend or even failed to recognize? It is difficult to answer this, but there are in Wesley's hymns a few brief expressions which do exert some imagistic force. In the following, for example, Wesley is attempting to sing of the goodness or fullness of God's love:

Thy Sign let them see,
And flow into Thee
For the Oil and the Wine,
For the blissful Assurance of Favour Divine.
(IV, 210)

Here Wesley at least uses a word (perhaps two) which can stimulate the sense of taste. "Oil" is not particularly enticing, but "wine" is far more stimulating to the taste buds than "feast" or "supper." Speaking of the nature of God's gifts to man, Wesley strives for a "tasty" statement:

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[7] The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns, p. 216.

> JESUS to you his Fulness brings,
> A feast of Marrow, and fat things:
> All, all in CHRIST is freely given,
> Pardon, and Holiness, and Heaven.
> (IV, 274)

"Fat things" could refer, I suppose, to objects which are not particularly appetizing, but this is about as sensuous as Wesley ever gets with "juicy" taste impressions. This particular phrase is from Psalms 63:5 which says "My soul shall be satisfied with marrow and fatness." He does succeed moderately in the following stanza to the extent that he uses specific foods rather than general words in his attempt to reveal the goodness of a Christian life:

> Rapt to Pisgah's top, I stand
> And more than see the Promis'd Land!
> Flows the word in milky rills,
> Honey from the Rock distils:
> (IX, 118)

But this taste image is lifted directly from the Bible (Genesis 3:8), and Wesley could claim no originality for it. Probably he sought none, for it is fair, I think, to say that his primary intent was to adapt the imagery of the Bible to the medium of congregational song--and this he did more effectively than most.

Sound is the sixth general sense impression which merits some attention. There are fifty-two auditory "devices," but this number is not strictly accurate, for some of the hymns contain a running echo which might well be referred to as having imagistic force. Basically there are six ways Charles Wesley employs this device. First, there is the use of a single word such as in the line "Hark how all the Welkin rings/ 'Glory to the King of Kings." This type of sound impression occurs thirteen times.

A second method which Wesley often employs is the use of vivid verbs to convey some sense of the condition of the speaker. "Shout ye sons of God for joy" (IV, 118) does strike the ear more forcefully than if Wesley had written "Whisper ye sons of God for Joy," and "Cry every soul aloud" (IV, 116) has an urgency that many verbs of speaking lack. We see this tendency to make the verb fit the subject in three of Wesley's hymns in which three different groups sing the same song.

> Let Angels and Archangels sing
> The wonderful Immanuel's name.
> (IV, 118)

But men are to "Shout Immanuel's Name"(IV, 108); when it is time for children to be heard Wesley chooses a verb to fit, perhaps out of the schoolroom, for in Nativity Hymns we read:

> He will not refuse the Song
> Of the stammering Infant's Tongue,
> Babes He hears humanely mild,
> Once himself a little Child.
>
> Let us then our Prince proclaim,
> Humbly chant Immanuel's Name,
> Publish at his wondrous Birth
> Praise in Heaven and Peace on Earth
> (IV, 117)

Angels, then are to "sing," men are to "shout," and children must "chant."

Some verbs reflect sorrow; "Longing, gasping after home" (I, 187), "Groaned her Pale Sons thy Stroke to feel,/ The first-born Victims groan'd and died" (IV, 302), are typical examples of the suffering human, while in the following stanza Wesley forces the reader to supply the groan himself:

> Ah, Lord! _______ if Thou art in that Sigh,
>   Then hear Thyself within me pray.
> Hear in my Heart Thy Spirit's Cry,
>   Mark what my lab'ring Soul would say,
> Answer the deep, unutter'd Groan,
>   And shew that Thou and I are One.

Wesley makes a great demand on the reader, for in the first line one would think that since he mentions "that Sigh" the singer is supposed to make it. But in the fifth line he remarks that the sigh was unutter'd. One can only make wild surmises concerning what different sounds the singers of Wesley's congregation managed to put in the "Ah, Lord!"

Another device which Wesley often employed was the use of words which forced the singer to rejoice (at least vocally). "Rejoice" is a favorite word for Wesley; in "Rejoice, again, I say, rejoice" (IV, 140) at the end of each of the six stanzas the singer would repeat this line--"Rejoice, again, I say, rejoice." Repetition, we are told, is the first duty of the teacher, and Wesley was, perhaps, conscious of the power of positive thinking, for he often put refrains of this nature at the end of his stanzas. In "Hail the Heav'nly Prince of Peace!"(I, 183) and in "Hail the day that sees Him rise" (I, 187) Wesley has the word "Hail" in such profusion that the rafters must have set up a vibration. But this was part of the Methodist tradition; people were to rejoice and they were to shout praises unto God. By use of these vigorous words Wesley saw to it that they did.

The following hymn is an excellent illustration of Wesley's use of words and expressions which appeal to the ear:

> Ye Servants of God, Your Master proclaim,
> And publish abroad His wonderful Name,
> The Name all-victorious of JESUS extoll:
> His Kingdom is glorious, And rules over All.
>
> The Waves of the Sea Have lift up their Voice,
> Sore troubled that we in JESUS rejoice;
> The Floods they are roaring, but JESUS is here,
> While we are adoring, He always is near.
>
> Men, Devils engage, The Billows arise,
> And horribly rage, And threaten the Skies:
> Their Fury shall never Our Steadfastness shock,
> The weakest Believer Is built on a Rock.
>
> God ruleth on High, Almighty to save,
> And still He is nigh, His Presence we have;
> The Great Congregation His Triumphs shall sing,
> Ascribing Salvation to JESUS our King.
>
> Salvation to God Who sits on the Throne!
> Let all cry aloud, And Honour the Son!
> Our JESUS's Praises The Angels proclaim,
> Fall down on their Faces, And worship the Lamb.
>
> Then let us adore, And give Him His Right,
> All Glory, and Power, And Wisdom, and Might,
> All Honour, and Blessing, With Angels above,
> And Thanks never ceasing, And infinite Love.
> (IV, 50)

The Servants of God are to "Proclaim" and "publish abroad" the first stanza states. In stanza two we have sound impressions as the waves, personified, "lift up their voice," and the floods "are roaring." Stanza three offers the sounds of battle, but in the fourth stanza there is the sound of triumphant singing, while stanza five tells us that all will "cry aloud." This type of sound impression does not occur nearly so regularly as visual impression, but in at least twelve hymns included in my study Wesley follows this practice of letting sound dominate the hymn.

The final use Wesley makes of sound is somewhat unusual. In seven hymns we find that he stresses the silence of Heaven--or he contrasts it with the noise of Hell or war, as in the following lines:

No horrid Alarm of War
  Shall break our Eternal Repose;
No sound of the trumpet is there,
  Where JESUS's Spirit o'erflows.
                                    (IV, 125)

Christians in heaven, however, don't spend all their time strumming on harps, for the silence is almost physical in the lines "And lo! we fall before his Feet,/ and silence heightens Heaven" (V, 168). Wesley gets confused in the following stanza, however, making a serious error in logic:

Thee the first-born Sons of Light
  In choral Symphonies
Praise by Day without Night
  And never, never cease:
Angels, and Archangels all
  Sing the Mystic Three in One,
Sing, and stop, and gaze and fall
  O'erwhelm'd before thy Throne.
                                    (V, 279)

In lines three and four he insists that the singing "never, never" stops, then in the sixth line he maintains pointblank that it does stop! If we ignore this error, we can see real genius in the sixth line. There is a visual action first which is quite vivid and which is accompanied by a falling off of sound until nothing remains but silence. They sing--they stop--they gaze--they fall-- and then they are "o'er-whelm'd." Wesley likes this device; perhaps he knew as a public speaker of great ability that the only two ways to catch the wandering attention of an audience are to shout--or to suddenly become absolutely silent. In any case, there are multiple examples of this in his work, such as:

Th' o'erwhelming Pow'r of saving Grace,
The Sight that veils the Seraph's Face,
The Speechless Awe that dares not move,
And all the silent Heaven of Love!
(V, 63)

Even more striking because of the violent contrast with the sound of hammers against the background is the following:

The Opposers admire
  The Hammer and Fire,
  Which all things o'ercomes,
And breaks the hard Rocks, and the Mountains consumes.
  With quiet Amaze
  They listen and gaze,
  And their Weapons resign,
Constrained to acknowledge--'The Work is Divine!'
(IV, 210)

The final type of sense impressions which Wesley frequently used appeals to the sense of touch. There are 126 of these--nearly one-sixth of the total number of general sense impressions.

Though there are many examples in Wesley's hymns of the physical impact produced by various words or expressions, it will not be necessary to quote a large number of hymns. Quite simply, Wesley drew heavily upon the imagery in the Bible (which is itself honey-combed with images appealing to touch). One very important group speaks of the relationship of Christ and the human being. Commonly, the relationship is set forth in physical terms:

Put thy hands upon my head,
Let me in Thine Arms be stayed,
Let me lean upon Thy Breast,
Lull me, lull me, Lord, to Rest.
Hold me fast in Thy Embrace
Let me see Thy smiling Face.
(VI, 441)

Quite clearly there is a metaphor somewhere in this stanza, but the appeal to physical sensation is also evident. The tired child seeks to be cuddled, to be embraced, to be lulled--all appealing to the sense of touch. "Hangs my helpless soul on Thee" (I, 259) captures in the word "hang" a physical sensation, just as does "Burdened soul . . . weary spirit" (IV, 116). The sensation is physical.

There are sensations which are not so pleasant. Death has a "sting" (I, 128) and man has been "Stung by the Scorpion Sin" (III, 71). But even then the sinner may pray that God will "Feed this tender branch of thine" (I, 197) or that when God "shakes the Nations" (IV, 103) and "Pierces the sinner with Dart of Fire" (I, 98) he will "Bear me through life's disparted waves" (IV, 103). Christ must "Bruise the Serpent's Head"(I, 183), and "Strangle the crooked serpent" (IV, 110), but then the Christian may "Rest in God's mighty hand" (IV, 18) knowing that "Shadow'd by thy mighty Hand/ Saviour, who shall pluck me thence?" (I, 197)

There is no necessity for multiple examples which have some appeal to the touch, and in truth, the number which I have listed in Appendix B is highly subjective. As I have remarked on visual imagery, to isolate these words, expressions, and images which are clearly impressions of sound is patently impossible.

The most significant fact which has appeared in my study of Charles Wesley's imagery (and especially with general sense impressions) is that he obviously felt that any one type of image was not mutually exclusive, or to put it another way, he had no hesitation whatsoever about letting different types of images slip into other categories, and he used general sense impression (some more than others) to lend tone or texture to his hymns.

I have listed eleven types of images in Appendix B which are neither comparative nor general sense impressions. Of these images the first seven are related in that they usually appear in a small unit of an entire hymn--a single word or a short phrase. The last four are more complex, for they frequently involve the entire structure of the hymn rather than single elements. Although there are only 476 images in this group, some of Wesley's most effective imagery is found here.

Wesley employs eponym a total of thirty-four times, and it is his practice to use the name of a biblical character to stand for a moral quality. Naturally this type of image is rarely striking or original, for he chooses as his examples those which are easily recognized. Five times he refers to men as "Adam," by which he implies that they have all fallen away from God's grace. In four instances "Israel" is applied to the redeemed individual, and in four instances he uses the name "Mary" for any woman who is pure. When we sing "Come all ye Jobs to worship here" (IV, 323) it is necessary to recognize that Wesley refers to Christians who have achieved the virtue of patience and that he makes no reference to employment. Three times "Cain" is used to refer to man's isolation from God, and "Belial" is used twice to refer to idolatrous practices. While not clearly an example of eponym, the word "Eden" is used in much the same way, for Wesley often uses the proper noun to refer to a state of happiness. It is difficult to classify this use of the word, for one could just as easily call it metonymy.

Metonymy is used thirty times by Wesley, but once again numbers are not indicative of importance. In nineteen of these instances Wesley simply uses the term "Heaven" in place of God. "Heaven speaks to us each day," for example, is his way of saying that "God speaks to us each day." In "Ah! lovely Appearance of Death!" there are certain words used for the body which can be considered as examples of this type of image. He refers to the corpse as "the beautiful Clay," "The Innocent Clay," and as "Relicks." In this same poem, life is called "Animal Flame," and a living human being is called a "gay Pageant." Quite often (though I have not included them in my tabulation) Wesley refers to pleasure as "the world" or as "flesh," and it is probable that if these were counted as images at all they would fall into the type under discussion. There are occasions when metonymy is very close to personification. "Earth sees his birth" uses the word "Earth" in place of humanity, and in the term "Heaven adores" we understand that it is the angels who adore. However, I have included these figures under the classification of personification. In "Come, let us away" (VI, 26) we are told that God "justly demands/ the Sweat of our brows, and the work of our hands"; the phrase "the Sweat of our brows" is obviously an example of metonymy. The only other instances of any importance are those references to the rewards (in Heaven) for the believer which Wesley lumps together under the metonymy ("crowns"). It seems fair to say that Charles Wesley knew how to use this type of image, but did not often choose to do so.

The danger of statistical tabulation of images is made quite plain in an examination of Wesley's use of synecdoche. According to Appendix B, there are 68 occurrences of this figure. Out of this number, however, 49 simply refer to "heart" as the entire man. This is so highly conventional that all imagistic force was lost long ago, and expressions such as "master of my heart," "possess my heart," "we lift our hearts," "the heart replies," and "give our hearts" are not images in the sense that they strike with some force on the reader (though they may be classified as synecdoche by reason of their structure). There is not a single good example of synecdoche in the representative hymns which I used as a basis for this study. God may "bend His ear," and we may "fly to his bosom"; my "flesh" may be sinful, my "tongue" may be redeemed, and "the arm of flesh" may fail. As far as synecdoche is concerned, we may write off Charles Wesley's hymns as a total loss.

The definition of epithet is so flexible that any discussion of this figure in Wesley's work must be quite broad. According to William Thrall and Addison Hibberd's A Handbook to Literature an epithet is "Strictly an adjective or adjective phrase used to point out a characteristic of a person or thing, as Goldsmith's 'noisy mansions' (for schoolhouse), but sometimes applied to a noun or noun phrase used for a similar purpose, as Shakespeare's quotation 'The trumpet of the dawn' (for the cock)"[8] The discussion which follows this definition, however, broadens its base to include "apt phrases" such as Keats'

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[8] New York, 1960, p. 181. Subsequent references to this work will be in the text.

"snarling trumpets" and Milton's "laboring clouds." Also included are Homeric epithets such as "all-seeing Jove," "swift-footed Achilles," and "rosy-fingered dawn," as well as "transferred epithets" (adjectives which modify nouns illogically) such as Milton's "blind mouth" or Shakespeare's "dusty death."

This definition would, it seems to me, enable one to place practically any adjectival structure under the heading of "epithet," but such a procedure is quite impossible in a study of Charles Wesley's hymns. The only general remark that one can make concerning his use of this figure is that he employed a great many. I have discovered four patterns which Wesley frequently used, but these are forms which are scattered; therefore, I shall simply point out the pattern and list examples.

Quite often Wesley uses the word "all" as the first half of a compound word, which is in effect a Homeric epithet. He spoke of "All-atoning Lamb" (III, 3), "All-quickening Breath" (I, 158), "All-redeeming Grace" (III, 71), "All-redeeming Love" (II, 323), "All-sufficient Grace" (IV, 16), "All-prevalent blood" (III, 301), and in one line he used three of these epithets: "All-wise, All-good, Almighty Lord" (III, 301). Considering Wesley's theology, his insistence on the sufficiency of God's grace, this use of "all" is not unusual.

Another adjective which Wesley relied on frequently is the word "Divine"; we find that he places it in the ultimate position when it is used as an epithet:

Radiancy Divine (I, 224)
Love Divine (I, 238)
Light Divine (I, 105)

Spirits Divine (I, 158)
Glory Divine (i, 257)
Faith Divine (IV, 299)
Life Divine (IV, 120)
Mercy Divine (IV, 122)
Death Divine (III, 229)
Victim Divine (III, 229)

Any attempt to enumerate the names which Wesley assigns to God in his hymns leads to confusion, for almost every hymn has one or more. I have counted them only once in my tables though they appear several times. These are names for God which are made from nouns or adjectives; they usually describe a quality of the deity and fit our definition. The most common ones are Redeemer, Comforter, Anointed One, Conqueror, Most High, Maker, Creator, the Crucified, Antient of Days, Desire of Nations, and First Adam.

By far the greatest number of epithets in Wesley's hymns are those which are related to the Pathetic Fallacy. This is not unusual, for many poets have used this device quite effectively. Epithets are usually very figurative, and the crediting of nature with human qualities (especially emotion) is not easily avoided. This category is quire arbitrary, and I shall simply list a number of examples without comment:

balmy sound (III, 71)
bounding Heart (II, 173)
Joyful Tongue (VII, 241)
benighted Heart (IV, 116)
burden'd Soul (IV, 116)
wishful eyes (IV, 123)
gracious days (V, 63)
wounded soul (I, 128)
stamm'ring tongue (I, 99)

Some of these are suspect, but "stamm'ring tongue" is used so frequently by Wesley that the very regularity of its appearance transforms it into something very much in the nature of an epithet.

I have indicated in Appendix B sixty-four examples of hyperbole, and most of these are used either in conjunction with the emotional state of the Christian or with the nature of God.

The emotional state of the Christian is frequently expressed by means of hyperbole. In the following hymn the tone is intensified through this method:

How happy are They
Who the Saviour obey,
And have laid up their Treasure above,
Tongue cannot express
The sweet Comfort, and Peace
Of a Soul in its earliest Love.

That Comfort was Mine,
When the Favour Divine
I first found in the Blood of the Lamb;
When my Heart it believ'd,
What a Joy it receiv'd,
What a Heaven in JESUS his Name!

'Twas an Heaven below
My Saviour to know;
The Angels could do Nothing more
Than fall at his Feet,
And the Story repeat,
And the Lover of Sinners adore.

JESUS all the Day long
Was my Joy and my Song;
O that All his Salvation may see!
He hath lov'd me, I cried,
He hath suffer'd, and died,
To redeem such a Rebel as me.

On the Wings of his Love
I was carried above
All Sin, and Temptation, and Pain;
I could not believe
That I ever should grieve,
That I ever should suffer again.

I rode on the Sky
(Freely justified I!)

Nor envied Elijah his Seat;
  My Soul mounted higher
  In a Chariot of Fire,
And the Moon it was under my Feet.

  O the rapturous Height
  Of that holy Delight,
Which I felt in the Life-giving Blood!
  Of my Saviour possest
  I was perfectly blest,
As if fill'd with the Fulness of God.
(IV, 408-409)

The entire hymn is a statement of the emotional state within a mystical experience, and the key line of stanza one is "Tongue cannot express . . ."; the rest of the hymn is an attempt to do exactly this--to express the experience--and it is by means of exaggeration that Wesley strives to accomplish this. In another hymn he cries out "O for a thousand tongues to sing" (I, 299), but having only one organ he must rely on hyperbole. The experience is related in stanzas two, three, and four, but in stanza five he speaks metaphorically and introduces the pure hyperbole in the sixth stanza. The final stanza is a falling off, for he once again attempts to tell the nature of the mystic experience.

By means of this device Wesley attempts to communicate to the audience something of the scope of his own experience--its depth and height. "I tread the World beneath my Feet" (V, 134) he cries, and he pleads that God will:

Loose our Hearts, and let us go
  Down the Spirit's fullest Flood,
Freely to the Fountain flow,
  All be swallowed up in God.
(VIII, 241)

When this happens, man becomes free and is able to include other men in his vision: "I taste my glorious Liberty,/ With Open arms the World embrace." (VI, 71) This effort to convey passion often falls flat, however, and we read such lines as "I thirst, I faint, and die!" (IV, 341) and "For Love I sigh, for Love I pine" (V, 234). At other times Wesley's burning desire to experience a deeper, more profound union with God led him to employ expressions which at least border on hyperbole. In the following hymn I have italicized those words or phrases which seem to me tinged with "enthusiasm" (italics mine):

O that I was as heretofore
When first sent forth in JESU's Name
I rush'd thro' every open Door,
And cried to All, 'Behold the Lamb!
Seiz'd the poor trembling Slaves of Sin,
And *forc'd* the Outcasts to come in.

The God who kills, and makes alive,
To me the quickning Power impart,
Thy Grace restore, thy Work revive,
Retouch my Lips, renew my Heart,
Forth with a fresh Commission send,
And all thy Servants Steps attend.

Give me the Faith which can remove,
And sink the Mountain to a Plain,
Give me the Child-like praying Love,
That longs to build thine House again;
The Love which once my Heart *o'erpower'd,*
And *all my simple Soul devour'd*.

I want an even strong Desire,
I want a calmly-fervent Zeal,
To save poor Souls out of the Fire,
To snatch them from the Verge of Hell,
And turn them to the Pardning God,
And *quench the Brands in JESU's Blood*.

I wou'd the pretious Time redeem,
And longer live of This alone
To spend, and to be spent for Them
Who have not yet my Saviour known,
Fully on These my Mission prove,
And *only* breathe, to breathe thy Love.

My Talents, Gifts, and Graces, Lord,
  Into thy blessed Hands receive,
And let me live to preach thy Word,
  And let me for thy Glory live,
My *every* sacred Moment spend
In publishing the Sinner's Friend.

Inlarge, *inflame*, *and fill my Heart*
  With *boundless* Charity Divine,
So shall *I all* my Strength exert,
  And love Them with a Zeal like Thine,
And *lead them to thine open Side*,
The Sheep, for whom their Shepherd died.

Or if, to serve thy Church and Thee
  Myself be offer'd up at last,
My soul brought thro' the *Purple Sea*
  With Those beneath the Altar cast
Shall claim the Palm to Martyrs given,
And *mount the highest Throne in Heaven*.
(V, 105-106)

The hymn begins with a hyperbole drawn from the words of the Bible, "Go out into the highways and compel them to come in" (Luke 14:23), but Wesley dramatizes the scene. We know that this is an exaggeration, that Wesley did not *literally* seize men and force them into a religious experience, but the hyperbole here is very vivid and quite successful. In stanza three the opening lines refer to the Bible again (Mark 11:23), but the words in the last two lines are clearly examples of hyperbole. The rest of the examples in the poem are matters of degree. Wesley knew logically that he must live twenty-four hours each day and that some of those hours and moments would be taken up by very "un-sacred" things such as sleeping or taking the dog for a walk; it is physically and psychologically impossible for anyone to exert *all* his strength or *all* his time for any purpose--even so noble a cause as the one of which Wesley sings. But desire may overcome logic. No one at this point can dissect Charles Wesley's emotional state, but in this hymn and in many others he insisted that he wished to devote his personality completely to God. Whether this is devotion or hyperbole is the decision of the reader. In the seventh stanza he refers to Christ's blood as a "Purple Sea," and he claims that Martyrs sit on "the highest Throne in Heaven." The former is clearly hyperbole, and if the latter be literally true, one is forced to speculate on exactly where Jehovah sits.

Apart from the emotional state of the Christian, Wesley's most extensive use of hyperbole occurs in his descriptions of God. We find references to the immensity of God: "Help us thy Mercy to extol,/ Immense, Unfathom'd, Unconfin'd" (III, 3), "Under Thy mighty hand I stoop" (II, 258), and "Bows the whole World to thy Sway" (IV, 125). Quite often Wesley slips into figures drawn from the Bible as in this stanza which refers to the second chapter of Song of Solomon:

> The voice of my Beloved sounds,
> While o'er the mountain-tops he bounds,
> He flies exulting o'er the hills,
> And all my soul with transport fills!
> (IX, 363)

Charles Wesley would probably say that to use hyperbole in speaking of God is a contradiction in terms. If God is limitless, infinite, beyond bounds, then any statement concerning his being could be true. There is one instance of his writing, however, which does not quite fit into this category--his expressions concerning the blood or the wounds of Christ. Although Charles Wesley does not use this figure as excessively as did the Moravians, there are multiple examples of it in his work. "The Purple Current" (V, 123) and the "Scarlet Tide" (VI, 233) are quite common, and the following stanza develops the figure:

What never, never more to sin!
  When shall I so abide in Thee?
Open thine heart and take me in,
  Plunge in the depths of Deity
A soul that to thy bosom flies
From sin: possest of this high prize
I ask no other paradise.
(XIII, 203)

Wesley never developed this rather violent hyperbole fully in his work, but it is evident that had he followed the "Blood and Wounds" school of the Moravians, his hymns would have been far different. The following hymn is an excellent example of this, though it is a free paraphrase of a German hymn[9] rather than an original composition:

Melt happy Soul, in JESU's Blood,
Sink down into the Wounds of God,
  And there forever dwell:
I now have found my Rest again,
The Spring of Life, the Balm of Pain
  In JESU's Wounds I feel.

Thirsty so long, and weak and faint,
I here enjoy whate'er I want,
  The sweet refreshing Tide
Brings Life and Peace to dying Souls:
And still the gushing Comfort rolls
  From JESU's wounded Side.

Swift as the panting Hart I fly,
I find the Fountain always nigh,
  And Heavenly Sweetness prove,
Pardon, and Power, and Joy, and Peace,
And Pure Delight, and Perfect Bliss,
  And everlasting Love.

The World can no Refreshment give:
Shall I its deadly Draughts receive,
  Scoup'd from the Hellish Lake?

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[9] Christian Friedrich Richter, "Zeuch hin mein, in Jesu blut und wunden." This hymn is given as No. 753 in the Gesangbuch (1737) by Baker in Representative Hymns (p. 122), and he also comments on the fact that John Wesley, who disliked this type of hymn, included it in Moral and Sacred Poems (1744).

Nay, but I turn to the pure Flood,
Which issues from the Throne of God,
  And living Water take.

Soon as I taste the liquid Life,
Sorrow expires, and Pain, and Strife,
  And Suffering is no more:
My inmost Soul refresh'd I feel,
And fill'd with Joy unspeakable
  The Bleeding Lamb adore.

I now the broken Cisterns leave;
My all of Good from God receive,
  And drink the crystal Stream:
The Crystal Stream doth freely flow
Thro' Hearts which only JESUS know,
  And ever pant for Him.

JESUS alone can I require,
No Mixture of impure Desire
  Shall in my Bosom move:
I fix on Him my single Eye,
His Love shall all my Wants supply,
  His All-sufficient Love.

How vast the Happiness I feel,
When JESUS doth Himself reveal,
  And His pure Love impart,
Holy Delight, and Heavenly Hope,
And everlasting Joy springs up
  And overflows my Heart.

He pours his Spirit into my Soul,
The thirsty Land becomes a Pool,
  I taste the unknown Peace
Such as the World cannot believe;
No Carnal Heart can e'er conceive
  Th' unutterable Bliss.

Light in thy only Light I see,
Thee, and Myself I know thro' Thee,
  Myself a sinful Clod,
A worthless worm without a Name,
A burning Brand pluck'd from the Flame,
  And quench'd in JESU's Blood.

The Light of thy Redeeming Love,
Like Sun-beams darted from above
  Doth all my Sins display,
Countless as dancing Motes, and small;

But o! the Love that shews them all,
  Shall chase them all away.

The Sun of Righteousness shall rise,
Thy Glory streaming from the Skies,
  Shall in my Soul appear;
I know the cloudless Day shall shine,
And then my Soul is all-divine,
  And I am Perfect here.
(III, 168-171)

The visual imagery in the penultimate stanza is very good, but the "Blood and Wounds" hyperbole of the entire hymn is evidence that Charles Wesley was wise to bend his talent in another direction.

Oxymoron is used only seventeen times by Wesley, but it is interesting to note that only five can be considered conventional in any sense while the remainder are of high poetic quality. Since Wesley's technique with this type of image is outstanding, I shall take each image separately.

Several oxymorons are connected quite closely with the doctrine of the Incarnation, more specifically with the death of Christ. Many of the hymns point out the paradox of God in a manger, but there are three instances in which he employs oxymoron to state the paradox of an immortal God dying. The sacrifice at Calvary was "Immortal Death" (III, 49), and Christ is an "expiring God" (III, 220). In the third instance it is obvious that Wesley places the oxymoron in the ultimate position for the purpose of paradox:

Ah, shew me that happiest place,
  That place of thy people's abode,
Where saints in an extasy gaze,
  And hang on a crucified GOD!
(IX, 362)

Only one other example might be added--Christ is "an inward Heaven"

(I, 223).

Although it is probably unfair, I notice one ludicrous example in "Ah, Lovely Appearance of Death!" The entire poem sounds completely morbid to the modern ear, and it is almost impossible to identify with Wesley when he says:

> With solemn Delight I survey
>   The corpse, when the Spirit is fled,
> In Love with the beautiful clay,
>   And longing to lie in its stead.

This "solemn Delight" is beyond the experience of most moderns, is "IN love with the beautiful Clay."

One original figure is a reference to hypocrites who perform "Satanick Righteousness" (VII, 223), and a more concise figure for the hypocrite would be difficult to find. Repentance, Wesley insists, produces "The guiltless Shame, the sweet Distress" (V, 63), and this paradox is reproduced in another example of oxymoron: "The Godly Grief, the pleasing Smart,/ The Meltings of a broken Heart . . ." (VI, 23).

In "Arm of the Lord, awake, awake!" (IV, 302-303) Wesley describes the plight of the Israelites as they come to the Red Sea:

> Divinely led the Favourites pass,
>   Th' Unwatry Deep, and emptied Sea.
> At Distance heap'd on either Hand,
>   Yielding a strange unbeaten Road,
> In Chrystal Walls the Waters stand,
>   And own the Arm of Israel's God!

"Emptied Sea" and "unbeaten Road" could be called examples of oxymoron, but "Th' Unwatry Deep" is a classic example of the type.

Another example of Wesley's ability to place an oxymoron in a controlling position is found in "The Universal God" (IV, 198). In one stanza which contains Miltonic echoes he writes of the mystery of the Spirit's creative power:

Thou didst thy mighty Wings outspread,
And brooding o'er the Chaos, shed
  Thy Life into th' impregn'd Abyss,
The vital Principle infuse,
And out of Nothing's Womb produce
  The Earth, and Heaven, and all that is.

The entire stanza is a statement of the power of the Spirit of God, and the oxymoron "Nothing's Womb" sets this power in the realm of mystery and offers in two words an imagistic force which reminds the reader that creation is something from nothing.

Another example of this technique is found in a short hymn which speaks of the mystery of prayer:

Prayer is the language of the heart,
  By humble faith to Heaven addrest,
Above the studied rules of art,
  And more in groans than words exprest.
Groans by the wrestling Spirit bestow'd.
Groans which affect the heart of God.

Father, the prayer Thou dost require
  Thro' Jesus I present to Thee,
In vehemence of inflam'd desire,
  In faith's resign'd simplicity,
In hope thy promis'd grace to prove,
In speechless eloquence of love.
(X, 177)

Wesley hints at his theory in the first line--prayer is something other than ordinary speech. In line three he carries us one step farther--it is"above the studied rules of art." In the rest of the stanza he insists that "groans" not speech will influence God. He reserves his climax until he makes his vow to meet the true conditions of prayer, and then he sums up his argument by stating that prayer must be "speechless eloquence."

The final examples of Wesley's use of oxymoron throw some light on the Methodist Movement as a whole. The most stringent critics of Methodism reserved their sharpest darts for the "enthusiasm" which became the most easily recognized characteristic of the followers of John Wesley. I have discussed this criticism at length in Chapter Two, and my conclusion is that while the laymen and some of the preachers of the early period were at times guilty of excessive "enthusiasm" neither John nor Charles Wesley indulged in any orgies of emotional displays. John Wesley often pointed out the necessity of order in religious services, and in two of Charles Wesley's hymns we find a reference to the necessity of channeling religious zeal into orderly behavior. In describing his concept of this union, Wesley said, "I want an even strong Desire,/ I want a calmly-fervent Zeal" (V, 105). A year later in 1750 he again insisted that while zeal was necessary, it must be contained:

> One Soul into us all inspire,
>   And let it strongly move
> In fervent Flames of calm desire
>   To glorify thy Love.
> (VIII, 404)

Nothing could describe John Wesley's attitude on this matter better than his brother's terms--"calmly-fervent Zeal" and "fervent Flames of calm desire."

Paradox (which is closely related to oxymoron) is employed 55 times. The following hymn is typical of Wesley's use of this figure:

> And can it be, that I should gain
>   An Int'rest in the Saviour's Blood!
> Dy'd He for Me?--who caus'd his Pain!
>   For Me?--who Him to Death pursu'd.

Amazing Love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for Me?

'Tis Myst'ry all! th'Immortal dies!
  Who can explore his strange Design?
In vain the first-born Seraph tries
  To sound the Depths of Love Divine.
'Tis Mercy all! Let Earth adore;
Let Angel Minds enquire no more.
(I, 105)

The "Myst'ry" of God's dealings gripped Charles Wesley all his life, and the organic paradox of the Christian religion is reflected in many of his best works. Paradox is not imagery in the strictest sense of the word, but it plays such a vital part in the structure of Wesley's work that I have included this device under non-comparative imagery. Sprinkled liberally throughout his hymns are expressions such as the one above, "th' Immortal dies!" or the "expiring God" (III, 220). The Incarnation cannot be explained, but Wesley never ceases to marvel at it:

CHRIST, by highest Heav'n ador'd,
CHRIST, the everlasting Lord,
Late in Time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's Womb.
(I, 183)

The Virgin Birth is paradoxical, and so is the union of God and man in Christ:

Didst Thou not in thy Person join
The Natures Human and Divine,
  That God and Man might be
Henceforth inseparably One?
(IV, 120)

The condescension of Christ's birth is a paradox--or at least a tremendous incongruity:

What a wonder of Grace!
The Antient of Days

Is found in the Likeness of Adam's frail race.
(IV, 122)

Wesley's short hymn on the incarnation is perhaps the one that appeared in Scripture Hymns (1762):

When He did our flesh assume
  That everlasting Man,
Mary held Him in her womb
  Whom heaven could not contain!
Who the mystery can believe?
Incomprehensible thou art;
Yet we still by faith conceive,
  And bear thee in our heart.

This may sound more like George Herbert than Charles Wesley; it is a little too clever, and "Incomprehensible" is too large a mouthful for most singers.

The Nativity Hymns abound with paradox of this sort; it would not be overstating the case to insist that paradox is the key to these hymns. Note that the following hymns are built around the paradox of Christ's incarnation:

Let Earth and Heaven combine,
  Angels and Men agree
To praise in Songs divine
  Th' Incarnate Deity,
Our God contracted to a Span,
Incomprehensibly made Man.

He laid his Glory by,
  He wrap'd Him in our Clay,
Unmark'd by Human Eye
  The latent Godhead lay;
Infant of Days He here became,
And bore the lov'd Immanuel's Name.

See in that Infant's face
  The Depths of Deity,
And labour while ye gaze
  To sound the Mystery:
In Vain; ye Angels Gaze no more,
But, fall, and silently adore.

Unsearchable the Love
  That hath the Saviour brought,
The Grace is far above
  Or Men or Angels Thought;
Suffice for Us, that God, we know,
Our God is manifest below.

He deigns in Flesh t'appear,
  Widest Extremes to join,
To bring our Vileness near,
  And make us All divine;
And we the Life of God shall know,
For God is manifest below.

Made perfect first in Love,
  And sanctified by Grace,
We shall from Earth remove,
  And see his glorious Face:
His Love shall then be fully shew'd,
And Man shall be lost in God.
(IV, 109)

This theme continues throughout the hymns celebrating Christ's birth: "Born a Child and yet a King" (IV, 116), "See the God who all Things made,/ Humbly in a Manger laid" (IV, 117), "The great Invisible is seen:" (IV, 118), "What a Wonder of Wonders that God is a child!" (IV, 119)

The paradox of Christ's atonement is also a subject which Wesley comments on in terms of paradox.

  He answer'd for All:
  O come at his Call,
And low at his Cross with Astonishment fall.
  But lift up your eyes
  At JESUS's Cries;
Impassive, He suffers; Immortal, He dies.

. . . .

  His Death is my Plea;
  My Advocate see,
And hear the Blood speak, that hath answer'd for me.
  Acquitted I was,
  When he bled on the Cross;
And by losing His Life, he hath carry'd my Cause.
(IV, 371-372)

There is one other facet of the Christian religion which Wesley often developed in his hymns through paradox--tribulation. In my sampling I found that four poems use this method to convey the "value" of suffering.

How happy are the little Flock,
Who safe beneath their Guardian Rock
  In all Commotions rest!
When wars and Tumult's Waves run high,
Unmov'd above the Storm they lie,
  They lodge in JESU's Breast.

Such Happiness, O Lord, have we,
By Mercy gather'd into Thee,
  Before the Floods descend:
And while the bursting Cloud comes down,
We mark the vengeful Day begun,
  And clamly wait the End.

The Plague, and Dearth, and Din of War
Our SAVIOUR's swift approach declare,
  And bid our Hearts arise:
Earth's Basis shook confirms our Hope,
Its cities Fall but lifts us up,
  To meet Thee in the Skies.

Thy Tokens we with Joy confess,
The War proclaims the Prince of Peace,
  The Earthquake speaks thy Power,
The Famine all thy Fulness brings,
The Plague presents thy healing Wings,
  And Nature's final Hour.

Whatever Ill the World befall,
A Pledge of endless Good we call,
  A Sign of JESUS near:
His Chariot will not long delay:
We hear the rumbling Wheels and pray
  Triumphant Lord, Appear.

Appear with Clouds on Sion's Hill,
Thy Word and Mystery to fulfill,
  Thy Confessors t'approve,
Thy Members on thy Throne to place,
And stamp thy Name on every Face
  In glorious heavenly Love.
                    (VI, 95-96)

Dr. Pangloss might enjoy the paradox in the fourth stanza, but Wesley's view is that all these terrible things are good because they mark the ending of earth's evil. The following hymn continues this theme:

And did my Lord on Earth endure
  Sorrow, and Hardship, and Distress,
That I might sit me down secure,
  And rest in self-indulgent Ease,
His delicate Disciple I
Like Him might neither live, nor die!

Master, I have not learnt Thee so:
  Thy Yoke, and Burthen I receive,
Resolve in all thy Steps to go,
  And bless the Cross by which I live,
And curse the Wisdom from beneath,
That Strives to rob me of thy Death.

Thy holy Will be done, not mine,
  Be suffer'd all thy holy Will:
I dare not, Lord, the Cross decline,
  I will not lose the slightest Ill,
Or lay the heaviest Burthen down,
The richest Jewel of my Crown.

Sorrow is solid Joy, and Pain
  Is pure Delight, endur'd for Thee,
Reproach and Loss are glorious Gain,
  And Death is Immortality;
And who for Thee their All have given,
Have nobly barter'd Earth for Heaven.

Saved is the Life for JESUS lost,
  Hidden from Earth, but found in God,
To suffer is to triumph most,
  The highest Gift on Man bestow'd,
Seal of my Sure Election This,
Seal of mine everlasting Bliss.

The Touchstone, and the Proof of Grace,
  The Standard of Perfection here,
The Measure of my Heavenly Place,
  When CHRIST and all his Saints appear,
The Mark Divine, by JESUS Art
Imprinted on my faithful Heart.

O might it deeper sink (but give
  Me Strength thy strongest Love to bear)
Fain would I die with Thee to live,

Fain would I all thy Passion share;
To me thy Thorny Crown be given
On Earth, thy glorious Crown in Heaven.
(V, 149-151)

"Thy Thorny Crown . . . Thy glorious Crown" is perhaps the key to the poem. The sufferings of the Christian may be "thorny," but he is assured of the glorious crown. This hymn averages almost one paradox per line, and the most reasonable criticism,I suppose, is that this is just too much of a good thing. In yet another hymn Wesley points out that evil can be good:

Patiently receiv'd from thee,
Evil cannot evil be:
Evil is by evil heal'd;
Evil is but good conceal'd,
And thro' the virtue of thy blood
Shall turn to our eternal good.
(IX, 231)

Here, of course, "Evil" refers not to moral evil but to misfortune. Even poverty can be "good":

Thou to me, O God, hast sent,
Food, and raiment, and content:
Yet for farther grace I sue,
For poverty, and riches too:
Both, and both at once, I want:
Poverty of spirit grant,
And fill me, Father, from above
With all the riches of thy love.
(IX, 355)

"Both and both at once I want." This sounds somewhat like the little boy who dug a hole in the ground then cried because he couldn't bring it into the house. Wesley often carries paradox so far that it sounds absurd, especially when one reads several hymns of this type in sequence. The danger of excessive paradox is found in one of Wesley's hymn books entitled "Hymns for the Trinity." Naturally, the paradox of the

Three-in-One is tempting to one who writes a book of this nature, and Wesley succumbs completely:

Praise the Father for his love,
CHRIST He sent us from above;
Publish the Redeemer's praise,
Bless the Spirit of his grace;
He reveals the trinity,
Three in one, and one in three.

Glory be to God alone,
One in three, and three in one,
God from whom all blessings spring
Every child of Adam sing,
Praise Him all ye heavenly host,
Father, Son, and Holy-Ghost.
(VI, 464-465)

This is not the worst of the hymns; it is typical. Wesley seemed to think that by chanting "three in one, and one in three" something could be achieved. He was mistaken.

I quote one more poem that is structured by the use of paradox. It is an "average" hymn, that is, it is not one of Wesley's best, but it is far from his worst. Probably it is his most effective use of paradox within a single hymn:

Thou hidden Source of calm Repose,
  Thou all-sufficient Love Divine,
My Help, and Refuge from my Foes,
  Secure I am, if Thou art mine,
And lo! from Sin, and Grief, and Shame
I hide me, JESUS, in thy Name.

Thy might If Name Salvation is,
  And keeps my happy Soul above,
Comfort it brings, and Power, and Peace,
  And Joy, and everlasting Love:
To me with thy dear Name are given
Pardon, and Holiness, and Heaven.

This, one must admit, is good writing, but the following is perhaps too dependent upon paradox:

JESU, my All in All Thou art,
  My Rest in Toil, my Ease in Pain,
The Med'cine of my Broken Heart,
  In War my Peace, in Loss my Gain,
My Smile beneath the Tyrant's Frown,
In Shame my Glory, and my Crown.

In Want my plentiful Supply,
  In Weakness my Almighty Power,
In Bonds my perfect Liberty,
  My Light in _Satan_'s darkest Hour,
In Grief my Joy unspeakable,
My Life in Death, my Heaven in Hell.
(IV, 129)

These last two stanzas are excellent examples of my conclusions concerning Wesley's use of paradox; he could use the device to great advantage, but he tended to use it excessively.

The last four types of non-comparative images are not confined to single words or phrases but are related to the total structure of hymns. These four include montage, hypotyposis, dramatic monologue, and allegory. None of these is mutually exclusive, and Wesley frequently combines them with other figures.

"Montage" is defined by _The Handbook to Literature_ as "a device, probably borrowed from motion pictures, used in _impressionism_ to establish a scene or an atmosphere by a series of brief pictures or impressions following one another quickly without apparent logical order" (p. 293). This device is used to a great extent by Wesley. In the following hymn several verbs are arranged to build within the structure a sense of urgency; the device is quite subtle in this particular hymn, but clearly Wesley has placed these verbs in key positions (italics mine):

See, JESU, thy Disciples see,
  The promis'd Blessing give,
Met in thy Name, we look to Thee,
  Expecting to receive.

Thee we expect our faithful Lord,
  Who in thy Name are join'd,
We wait, according to thy Word,
  Thee in the midst to find.

With us Thou art assembled here,
  But O Thyself reveal,
Son of the Living God, appear,
  Let us Thy presence feel.

Breathe on us, Lord, in this our Day,
  And these dry Bones shall live,
Speak peace into our Hearts, and say
  The Holy Ghost receive.

Whom now we seek O might we meet!
  JESUS the Crucified,
Shew us thy bleeding Hands and Feet,
  Thou who for us hast died.

Cause us thy Record to receive,
  Speak, and the Tokens shew,
'O be not faithless, but believe
  In me, who died for you.'

Lord, I believe for me, ev'n me
  Thy Wounds were open'd wide,
I see the Prints, I more than see
  Thy Feet, thy Hands, thy Side.

I cannot fear, I cannot doubt,
  I feel the sprinkled Blood:
Let every Soul with me cry out
  Thou art my Lord, my God!
(V, 469-470)

"See--reveal--breathe--speak--Shew--Cause." These imperatives in the initial position in most cases lend urgency to the hymn, and if this is not a particularly good example of how montage works within a composition as a whole, there is certainly a good example of the technique in the last line of stanza seven. When Wesley speaks of

"Thy Feet, thy Hands, thy Side" we find a series of short, vivid images created by the method of linking these nouns together by the means of montage.

Notice another example of the technique within the structure of a hymn:

Where is the holy Heav'n-born Child,
  Heir of the everlasting Throne,
Who Heav'n and Earth hath reconciled,
  And God and Man rejoin'd in One?

Shall we of earthly Kings enquire,
  To Courts or Palaces repair?
The Nation's Hope, the World's Desire,
  Alas! we cannot find Him there.

Shall Learning shew the Sinner's Friend,
  Or Scribes a Sight of CHRIST afford?
Us to his Natal Place they send,
  But never go to see their Lord.

We search the Outward Church in vain,
  They cannot Him we seek declare,
They have not found the Son of Man,
  Or known the Name they bear.

Then let us turn no more aside,
  But use the Light Himself imparts,
His Spirit is our surest Guide,
  His Spirit glimmering in our Hearts.

Drawn by his Grace we come from far,
  And fix on Heaven our wishful Eyes,
That Ray divine, that orient Star
  Directs us where the Infant lies.

See there! the new born Saviour see,
  By Faith discern the great *I Am*;
'Tis He! the Eternal God! 'tis He
  That bears the mild *Immanuel*'s Name.

The Prince of Peace on Earth is found,
  The Child is born, the Son is given;
Tell it to all the Nations round,
  Jehovah is come down from Heaven!

Jehovah is come down to raise
  His dying creatures from their Fall,
And all may now receive the Grace
  Which brings eternal Life to all.

Lord, We receive the Grace and Thee,
  With Joy unspeakable receive,
And rise Thine open Face to see,
  And one with God forever live.
(IV, 123-124)

In this hymn as in so many of his compositions, Wesley did not know when to quit. The structure of the first five stanzas is complete. Stanza one states the question: "Where is the holy Heav'n-born Child," and in stanza two we have the first suggestion--in a palace. Christ is not to be found there, however, so Wesley offers another possibility in stanza three--a school. But neither is Christ here, so Wesley quickly offers another possibility in stanza four--the church. But even here the new-born King is not to be found, and Wesley concludes with stanza five (which really closes the hymn) in which he insists that Christ is to be found within the individual rather than within institutions. These three quick flashes--palace, school, church--leave the impression of movement, of searching from one then moving to the next, and this is the essence of Wesley's use of this technique.

Fourteen times out of the total of thirty-five this device is employed to emphasize some facet of the human condition--either of the regenerate man or the unregenerate sinner. The sinner is "Empty, poor, and void of Thee,/ Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind" (I, 96), but God invites all "Harlots, and Publicans, and Thieves" (I, 299) though they "sigh, and gasp and languish" (I, 74) to His Kingdom. Often the prayers within the hymns reveal the sinner's condition through montage:

Lord, I am sick; my Sickness cure:
I want; do Thou enrich the Poor;
Under Thy mighty Hand I stoop,
O lift the abject Sinner up!

Lord, I am blind: be Thou my Sight:
Lord, I am weak, be Thou my Might:
An Helper of the Helpless be,
And let me find my All in Thee.
(II, 259)

It is possible that Wesley carries the device too far in the following stanzas:

The Godly Grief, the pleasing Smart,
The Meltings of a broken Heart,
The Tears that speak your Sins forgiv'n,
The Sighs that waft your Soul to Heav'n.

The guiltless Shame, the sweet Distress,
Th' unutterable Tenderness,
The genuine meek Humility,
The Wonder, why such Love to me!
(V, 64)

Whatever else may be said one thing is evident: Wesley teaches the singer by means of multiple images that repentance must be painful.

But montage is also employed to express the magnitude of the mystic experience:

Endless Scenes of Wonder rise
  With that mysterious Tree,
Crucified before our Eyes
  Where we our Maker see:
JESUS, LORD, what hast thou done!
  Publish we the Death Divine,
Stop, and gaze, and fall, and own
  Was never Love like Thine!
(III, 229)

The penultimate line of this stanza is a fitting climax achieved by a series of physical actions. There is a visual picture of one who stops--then gazes with awe--and finally drops to his face to confess God's mystery. The following lines evidence Wesley's ability to create spatial images through the use of montage:

Soar we now, where CHRIST has led?
  Following our Exalted Head,
Made like Him, like Him we rise,
  Ours the Cross--the Grave--the Skies!
(I, 185)

In this case Wesley provides a sharp break by inserting dashes which force the reader to picture the actions described. But Wesley frequently uses nouns instead of verbs or adjectives for the purpose of montage:

Fruit of Thy gracious Lips, on Me
  Bestow that Peace unknown,
The Hidden Manna, and the Tree
  Of Life, and the White Stone.

This stanza combines metaphor with montage and the forcefulness is somewhat limited because of the esoteric images, particularly the "White Stone."

The other major use Wesley makes of montage is to capture the essence of God. Frequently he does so by listing God's qualities in series, such as in the phrase, "All-wise, all-good, almighty Lord" (IV, 120) or in the lines "The Length, and Breadth, and Height to prove,/ And Depth of Sovereign Grace!" (IV, 445) Notice in the following stanza the number of names which Wesley assigns to God (italics mine):

Thee high-inthron'd above all Height,
Thee *God of God*, and *Light of Light*
  I come undaunted to confess,
With *God* essentially the same,
JEHOVAH, *JAH*, the Great *I Am*,
  The *Lord of Hosts*, the *Prince of Peace*:
The *Sovereign everlasting Lord*,
 The glorious *Unbeginning Word*,
  The *Son of God*, the *Son of Man*,

God over Heaven and Earth supreme,
Made Flesh thy Creature to redeem,
For me incarnated, and slain.
(V, 134)

Here Wesley's purpose is to magnify God through the use of names, and it is possible that one could call this something other than montage; it is not, however, mere repetition. In the following stanza God is seen through a series of physical acts, all metaphoric:

Come Lord, and tame the Tiger's force,
Arrest the whirlwind in my will,
Turn back the torrent's rapid course,
And bid the headlong sun stand still.
The Rock dissolve, the mountain move,
And melt my hatred into love.
(XI, 156)

If one doubted Wesley's poetic ability, this stanza might give him pause. The power of God to change the spirit of man is vividly set forth by means of a series of metaphors, and visual imagery is intermingled with metaphor and montage to achieve the effect. This ability to allow one figure to flow into another--and then to add a touch of biblical flavor--is quite obvious in the following hymn:

O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art!
When shall I find my longing Heart
All taken up by Thee?
I thirst, I faint, and die, to prove
The Greatness of redeeming Love,
The Love of CHRIST to me.

Stronger his Love, than Death or Hell;
Its Riches are unsearchable:
The first-born Sons of Light
Desire in vain its Depth to see;
They cannot reach the Mystery,
The Length, and Breadth, and Height.

God only knows the Love of God.
O that it now were shed abroad
In this poor stony Heart!

For Love I sigh, for Love I pine:
This only Portion, Lord, be mine,
  Be mine this better Part.

O that I could forever sit,
With _Mary_, at the Master's Feet!
  Be this my Happy Choice!
My only Care, Delight, and Bliss
My Joy, my Heav'n on Earth be this.
  To hear the Bridegroom's Voice.

O that with humbled _Peter_ I
Could weep, believe, and thrice reply,
  My Faithfulness to prove!
Thou know'st, for all to Thee is known,
Thou know'st, O Lord, and Thou alone,
  Thou know'st that Thee I love.

O that I could, with favour'd _John_,
Recline my weary Head upon
  The dear Redeemer's Breast!
From Care, and Sin, and Sorrow free,
Give me, O Lord, to find in Thee
  My everlasting Rest.

Thy only Love do I require,
Nothing on Earth beneath desire,
  Nothing in Heaven above:
Let Earth and Heaven, and all Things go,
  Give me thine only Love.
(IV, 341)

In every stanza of this hymn there are constructions which appear to be montage, but the words in the last line of stanza three, "this better part," introduce three stanzas, each giving a characteristic of the joys of Christian living; each is drawn from the Bible and each is, of course, a metaphor.

Montage represents only a small fraction of the total number of images found in Appendix B; however, the technique is basic in Wesley's hymns, and it seemed unwise to omit it.

The second of the "structural" image devices which merits discussion is hypotyposis or "lively description." This is actually the practice of showing through means of a "scene" some aspect which requires vivid exposition. Wesley frequently uses this device to bring a scene immediately before our eyes:

> See! He lifts his Hands above!
> See! He shews the Prints of Love!
> Hark! His gracious lips bestow
> Blessings on his church below!
> (I, 188)

Or the following:

> O that I was as heretofore
> When first sent forth in JESU's Name;
> I rush'd thro' every open Door,
> And cried to All, 'Behold the Lamb!'
> Seiz'd the poor trembling Slaves of Sin,
> And forc'd the Outcasts to come in.
> (V, 105)

And in the stanza below, Wesley intensifies his verse by portraying a vivid scene:

> O take me at my Word,
> But arm me with thy Power,
> Then call me forth to suffer, Lord,
> To meet the fiery Hour:
> In Death will I proclaim
> That all may hear thy Call,
> And clap my Hands amidst the flame,
> And Shout--HE DIED FOR ALL.
> (III, 38)

This is a vivid scene, but often scene in the physical sense is substituted for a metaphysical truth. A metaphor is placed in the framework of a scene as in the following:

> Faith in thy blood if Thou bestow,
> The sting of guilt no more I know,
> The self-tormenting mind;
> I plunge me in th' oblivious floud,
> I wash away my sinful load,
> And leave myself behind.
> (XIII, 144)

These examples occur in single stanzas, but Wesley was fond of using hypotyposis for the structure of the entire hymn as in "O Love unknown!" "Lo, he comes with clouds discending," or the following very brief hymn:

> Speechless the Saviour stood
> Beneath my guilty load,
> He answer'd not, for I
> Have nothing to reply:
> But when condemn'd and dumb
> I before God become,
> His mouth is open'd then for me,
> His blood proclaims the sinner free.

This single stanza hinges on a brief scene, or we might say two scenes--Christ in judgment and the creature before the judge.

The following is an extended metaphor, but it is also grounded in hypotyposis:

> Jesus, to Thee I would look up,
> Tost in a Storm of Passion,
> Thou art the Anchor of my Hope,
> Thou art my strong Salvation:
> Pity and save a Soul, distrest
> Till I the Port recover;
> O that I in thy wound might rest,
> Till all the Storm is over.
>
> Great is the Storm that works within,
> Jesus His grace is greater:
> Thou art above the Power of Sin,
> Thou art the God of Nature:
> Speak; and at thy supream Command
> Trouble and Sin shall leave me.
> Stir up thy Strength, stretch out thine Hand,
> Say 'It is I', and save me.
>
> Give me this Hour thy Help to find,
> Shew me thy great Salvation,
> So will I call on All mankind
> In loving Admiration,
> O what a Man, A God, is This!
> Nature is still'd before Him.
> Lo! at his Word the Winds & Seas
> Suddenly calm'd adore Him.
> (XIII, 253)

The dramatic quality of the following hymn is undeniable:

Come let us join our Friends above
  That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle-wings of love
  To Joy celestial rise;
Let all the Saints terrestrial sing
  With those to glory gone,
For all the servants of our King
  In earth and Heaven are one.

One family we dwell in Him,
  One Church above, beneath,
Tho' now divided by the stream
  The narrow stream of death:
One Army of the living God,
  To his command we bow:
Part of his host hath cross'd the flood,
  And part is crossing now.

Ten thousand to their endless home
  This solemn moment fly
And we are to the margin come,
  And we expect to die:
His militant, embodied host
  With wishful looks we stand
And long to see that happy coast,
  And reach the heavenly land.

Our old companions in distress,
  We haste again to see,
And eager long for our release
  And full felicity:
Ev'n now by faith we join our hands
  With those that went before,
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands
  On the eternal shore.

Our spirits too shall quickly join,
  Like theirs, with glory crown'd,
And shout to see our Captain's sign,
  To hear his trumpet sound:
O that we now might grasp our guide,
  O that the word were given!
Come Lord of hosts the waves divide,
  And land us all in heaven.
(VI, 215-16)

Once again we see Wesley's ability to transform a single metaphor into a vivid scene. The "family" which comes to the stream of death is suddenly an "Army," and the emphasis of the word now and This lends a sense of dramatic immediacy to the scene. The last stanza completes the little drama by showing the arrival in heaven of the "army" and Wesley adds sound effects to the victorious entry by means of words like "shout," "trumpet," and "sound."

One of the most vivid hymns which Wesley ever wrote is the following. Note that the scene in stanza three is an abrupt change from the one in the first two stanzas. This is mixed metaphor, of course, but Wesley frequently did this sort of thing.

How shall a Slave releast
  From his oppressive Chain
Distinguish Ease, and Rest
  From Weariness, and Pain?
Can He his Burthen borne away
  Infallibly perceive?
Or I before the Judgment-Day
  My pardon'd Sin believe?

Redeem'd from all his Woes,
  Out of his Dungeon freed,
Ask, how the Prisoner knows
  That he is free indeed!
How can He tell the Gloom of Night
  From the Meridian Blaze?
Or I discern the Glorious Light,
  That Streams from JESU's Face?

The gasping Patient lies
  In Agony of Pain!
But see Him light arise,
  Restor'd to Health again!
And doth He certainly receive
  The Knowledge of his Cure!
And am I Conscious that I live?
  And is my Pardon sure?

A Wretch for Years consign'd
  To hopeless Misery,
The happy Change must find,
  From all his Pain set free:
And must not I the Difference know
  Of Joy, and anxious Grief,

Of Grace, and Sin, of Weal, and Woe,
Of Faith, and Unbelief?

Yes, Lord, I now perceive,
And Bless Thee for the Grace,
Thro' which redeem'd I live
To see thy smiling Face:
Alive I am, who once was dead,
And freely Justified;
I *know* thy Blood for me was shed
I *feel* it now applied.

By Sin no longer bound,
The Prisoner is set free,
The Lost again is found
In Paradise, in Thee:
In Darkness, Chains, and Death I was,
But Lo! to Life restor'd,
Into thy wondrous Light I pass,
The Freeman of the Lord.

In Comfort, Power, and Peace
Thy Favour, Lord, I prove,
In Faith, and Joy's Increase,
And self-abasing Love:
Thou dost my pardon'd Sin reveal,
My Life, and Heart renew;
The pledge, the Witness, and the Seal
Confirm the Record true.

The Spirit of my God
Hath certified Him Mine,
And all the Tokens shew'd
Infallible, Divine:
Hereby the pardon'd Sinner knows
His Sins on Earth forgiven,
And thus my faithful Saviour *shews*
My Name inscrib'd in Heaven.
(VI, 365-367)

The most dramatic hymn which Wesley ever wrote, and according to many the best[10] is the one usually known as "Wrestling Jacob." The intensity and poetic power of this hymn capture the drama of man's encounter with God; it is unexcelled in the annals of hymnody, and though it might be correct to classify this poem as allegory, the dramatic element is what gives it life.

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[10] Dr. Watts regarded the hymn as being worth all the verses he himself had written. See Dr. Osborn's note in *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley* (XIII, 314).

> Come, O Thou Traveller unknown,
>   Whom still I hold, but cannot see,
> My Company before is gone,
>   And I am left alone with Thee,
> With Thee all Night I mean to stay,
> And wrestle till the Break of Day.
>
> I need not tell Thee who I am,
>   My Misery, or Sin declare
> Thyself hast call'd me by my Name,
>   Look on Thy Hands, and read it there,
> But who, I ask Thee, who art Thou,
> Tell me Thy Name, and tell me now.
>
> In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
>   I never will unloose my Hold:
> Art Thou the Man that died for me?
>   The Secret of Thy Love unfold;
> Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
>   Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.
>
> Wilt Thou not yet to me reveal
>   Thy new, unutterable Name?
> Tell me, I still beseech Thee, tell,
>   To know it Now resolv'd I am;
> Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
> Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.
>
> 'Tis all in vain to hold Thy Tongue,
>   Or touch the Hollow of my Thigh:
> Though every Sinew be unstrung,
>   Out of my Arms Thou shalt not fly;
> Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
> Till I Thy Name, Thy Nature know.
>
> What tho' my shrinking Flesh complain,
>   And murmur to contend so long,
> I rise superior to my Pain,
>   When I am weak then I am strong,
> And when my All of Strength shall fail,
> I shall with the God-man prevail.
>
> My Strength is gone, my Nature dies,
>   I sink beneath Thy weighty Hand,
> Faint to revive, and fall to rise;

I fall, and yet by Faith I stand,
I stand, and will not let Thee go,
Till I thy Name, Thy Nature know.

Yield to me Now--for I am weak;
But confident in Self-despair:
Speak to my Heart, in Blessings speak,
Be conquer'd by my Instant Prayer,
Speak, or Thou never hence shalt move,
And tell me, if Thy Name is Love.

'Tis Love, 'tis Love! Thou diedst for Me,
I hear Thy Whisper in my Heart.
The Morning breaks, the Shadows flee:
Pure UNIVERSAL LOVE Thou art,
To me, to All Thy Bowels move,
Thy Nature, and Thy Name is Love.

My Prayer hath Power with God; the Grace
Unspeakable I now receive,
Thro' Faith I see Thee Face to Face,
I see Thee Face to Face, and live;
In vain I have not wept, and strove,
Thy Nature, and Thy Name is LOVE.

I know Thee, Saviour, who Thou art,
Jesus the feeble Sinner's Friend;
Nor wilt Thou with the Night depart,
But stay, and love me to the End;
Thy Mercies never shall remove,
Thy Nature, and Thy Name is LOVE.

The Sun of Righteousness on Me
Hath rose with Healing in his Wings,
Wither'd my Nature's Strength; from Thee
My Soul its Life and Succour brings,
My Help is all laid up above;
Thy Nature, and Thy Name is LOVE.

Contented now upon my Thigh
I halt, till Life's short Journey end;
All Helplessness, all Weakness I,
On Thee alone for Strength depend,
Nor have I power, from Thee, to move;
Thy Nature, and Thy Name is LOVE.

Lame as I am, I take the Prey,
Hell, Earth, and Sin with Ease o'ercome;
I leap for Joy, pursue my Way,
And as a bounding Heart fly home

Thro' all Eternity to prove
Thy Nature and Thy Name is Love.
(II, 173-176)

A third device which Wesley used on occasion is the dramatic monologue. Because of the imagistic force in this form, I have included it among the non-comparative images; obviously it is closely related to drama. Thirteen times we find within the framework of a hymn someone speaking directly, such as the first two stanzas of "And can it be, that I should gain" which consist of the speech of a sinner who speculates on the mystery of God's grace, or in the following lines:

I felt my Lord's Atoning Blood
Close to *my* Soul applied:
Me, *me* he lov'd--the Son of God
For *me*, for *me* He died!

The *persona* of this hymn may or may not be Charles Wesley, but whoever speaks is a distinct personality; the emphasis on "me" requires that this be classified as a "little" dramatic monologue. In the following hymn the speaker is quite distinct:

Happy Soul, depart in Peace,
Leave awhile thy Friends below,
JESUS speaks the kind Release,
Go, to JESU' Bosom go!

Hark, He calls his Exile home
(Joyfully the Call obey)
Come up hither, quickly come,
Rise my Love, and come away.

'I have thy Salvation wrought,
I did for thy Guilt atone,
Thou art mine, so dearly bought,
Thee I challenge for my own.

'I ev'n I have purg'd thy Sin,
Have for Thee a Place prepar'd;
Heaven is open, Enter in,
Find in me thy Great reward.

'Thee the Purchase of my Blood,
  Thee my Servant, Child, and Bride,
Thee I claim, thy Lord and God,
  Who for Thee have liv'd and died.

'Come, thro the dark Valley come!
  Do not I thy Spirit stay?
Fear no evil, hasten home,
  Rise, my Love, and come away.
(III,171)

In another hymn the Herald Angel becomes the speaker:

Ye simple Men of Heart sincere,
  Shepherds who watch your Flocks by Night,
Start not to see an Angel near,
  Nor tremble at this glorious Light.

An Herald from the Heavenly King
  I come, your every Fear to chase;
Good Tidings of Great Joy I bring,
  Great Joy to all the Fallen Race!

To you is born on this glad Day,
  A Saviour by our Host ador'd,
Our God in Bethlehem survey,
  Make Haste to worship CHRIST the Lord.

By this the Saviour of Mankind,
  Th' Incarnate God shall be display'd,
The Babe ye wrapp'd in Swaths shall find,
  And humbly in a Manger laid.
(IV, 106)

Far more dramatic than this is the dramatic monologue by an Israelite bitten by a serpent in the Wilderness:

O that I could look to thee,
  Jesus, lifted up for me,
Me a wounded Israelite,
Me expiring in thy sight.

Guilt the serpent's sting I feel,
Anguish inconceivable,
Bleeding, gasping on the ground,
Dying of the poisonous wound.

But with a believing eye
If I can my Lord espy,

Hanging on the sacred pole,
I, ev'n I, shall be made whole

Give me now to find thee near,
Now as crucified appear;
Life is thro' thy wounds alone,
Mine to heal, display thine own.
(XI, 216)

The allusions to the story in Exodus would be more familiar to Wesley's audience than to our own biblically illiterate congregations, but even modern worshippers should recognize the speaker in the following hymn:

Return'd into thy kingdom, Lord,
  For good remember me,
And tell a penitent restor'd,
  I soon shall be with thee.

The offering of a broken heart
  Thou never wilt despise,
But while my soul and body part,
  Accept the sacrifice.

My spirit humbly I commend,
  To thy redeeming care,
My last important moments spend
  In penitence and prayer.

And if I may not testify
  On earth my sins forgiven,
Yet I, the poorest outcast I
  May praise thy love in heaven.
(IV, 129-130)

I conclude that Wesley infrequently used this method, and that he was capable of working with it quite well. There is one example in his work of dialogue. He wrote only one hymn in this form, and it is not included in my sampling, but since it is an interesting variation on the dramatic monologue, I have chosen to include it.

A DIALOGUE OF ANGELS AND MEN II, 234-235

A. Ye worms of earth, our God admire,
   The God of Angels praise:

M. Praise Him for us, ye heavenly choir,
His earth-born sons of grace.
A. His image view in us display'd,
His nobler creatures view:
M. Lower than you our souls he made,
But he redeem'd us too.
A. As gods we did in glory shine,
Before your world began:
M. Our nature too becomes Divine,
And God Himself is Man.
A. He clothed us in these robes of light,
The shadow of His Son:
M. We, with transcendent glory bright,
Have Christ Himself put on.
A. Spirits like Him He made us be,
A pure ethereal flame:
M. Join'd to the Lord, one spirit we
With Jesus are the same.
A. We see Him on His dazling throne,
Crowns he to us imparts:
M. To us the King of kings comes down,
And reigns within our hearts.
A. Pure as He did at first create,
We angels never fell:
M. He saves us from our lost estate,
He rescues man from hell.
A. When others fell we faithful proved,
His love preserved us true:
M. Yet own that we are more beloved,
He never died for you.
A. Worms of earth, to you, we own,
The nobler grace is given:
M. Then praise with us the great Three-One,
Till we all meet in heaven.
(II, 234-235)

Allegory is the final type of non-comparative imagery which I have listed in Appendix B. Thrall and Hibbard define this device as "a form of extended metaphor in which objects and persons in a narrative, either in prose or verse, are equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself" (Handbook, p. 7). This rather flexible definition would certainly apply to "Wrestling Jacob" (II, 173-176), and by taking the most liberal view of the term "narrative" at least six other hymns can be classified as allegories. "Soldiers of CHRIST, arise" (V, 40-44) has elements of narration in it, and the physical weapons of war certainly are "equated with meanings that lie outside the narrative itself."

Before quoting several hymns which are allegorical in structure, I would like to point out that Wesley frequently used allegory in his secular poetry. The following composition is typical of a group of poems which Wesley wrote during the period of the American Revolution. Frank Baker includes the poem in Representative Verse of Charles Wesley, introducing it by stating that "the 1780's saw the phenomenal growth of the plans for an 'Association', supposedly of 'the people', which should dictate to the Crown and Government. They took their cue from revolutionaries both in America and Ireland. Almost inevitably the genuine grievances were almost forgotten as the Association became a political tool in the hands of men like Fox."[11]

The poem is not outstanding, but it does reveal Wesley's ability to use allegory:

> Once on a time, a gallant Ship
> Was sailing on th' Atlantic deep,
> A gang of Transports in the hold
> Confin'd, to desperation bold,
> And madly bent to break their chain,
> Their freedom, and the Helm to gain;
> Had long their hands in secret ply'd,
> And in the bottom bored a wide
> Tremendous hole--alarm'd the Crew
> Swift to their boat, escaping, flew:
> (But none unlocks the fetter'd slaves,
> But none the Self-destroyers saves.)
> The sea pour'd in, as well it might,
> The vessel fill'd, and sunk outright,
> But sunk with all its wicked freight,
> And whirl'd the Felons to their fate.

---

[11] pp. 353-354.

So in our days a Gang we see
Link'd in a dark Conspiracy,
The Vessel of the State to make
A sure, but profitable, wreck,
That while the waves our Ship o'erwhelm
Themselves may seize, and rule the Helm;
Nor do the desperate Wretches dream
The foundering Ship will bury Them.

Must not He sink in the abyss
The shackled slave of every vice,
Unless some friendly hand unlocks
The fetters of felonious Fox?
Must not his Comrades share his fate,
Opprest by their own guilty weight,
By avarice, lust, ambition, pride,
And plunge in the avenging tide?
Can the Associators shun
The mischiefs their own hands have done?
Can the assassin band emerge,
When Britain sinks beneath the Surge?
Or claim the empire of the main,
Or kings by our destruction reign?

You that survive the wreck, attend
The Patriot-plan, and mark the end!
Tho' oft the Wicket here we see
Triumphant in their villany,
Their wickedness, or soon or late,
Shall surely fall on their own pate,
And sink them with their plots profound
In bottomless perdition drown'd.[12]

Wesley manages to spoil the effect to some degree by over-explaining, but the allegorical method is clear.

The following hymn is based on the parable of the Great Supper (Luke 14: 16-24), and while it obviously is not as strong dramatically as the poem above, there is a definite narrative quality:

Come, Sinners, to the Gospel-Feast,
Let every Soul be JESU's Guest,
You need not One be left behind,
For God hath bidden all Mankind.

---

[12] "Patriotism" MS, Methodist Book Room, City Road, London.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call,
The invitation is to All:
Come all the World: Come, Sinner, Thou,
All Things in CHRIST are ready now.

JESUS to you his Fulness brings,
A Feast of Marrow, and fat Things:
All, all in CHRIST is freely given,
Pardon, and Holiness, and Heaven.

Do not begin to make Excuse,
Ah! do not you his Grace refuse:
Your worldly Cares and Pleasures leave,
And take what JESUS hath to give.

Your Grounds forsake, your Oxen quit,
Your every Earthly Thought forget,
Seek not the Comforts of this Life,
Nor sell your Saviour for a Wife.

'Have me excus'd' why will ye say?
Why will ye for damnation pray?
Have you excus'd--from Joy and Peace!
Have you excus'd--from Happiness!

Excus'd from Coming to a Feast!
Excus'd from being JESU's Guest!
From knowing Now your Sins forgiven,
From tasting Here the Joys of Heaven!

Excus'd, alas! why would ye be
From Health, and Life, and Liberty,
From entering into Glorious Rest,
From leaning on your Saviour's Breast.

Yet must I, Lord, to Thee complain,
The World have made thy offers vain,
Too Busy, or too Happy They,
They will not, Lord, thy Call obey.

Go then, my angry Master said,
Since These on all my Mercies tread,
Invite the Rich and Great no more,
But preach my Gospel to the Poor.

Confer not Thou with Flesh and Blood,
Go quickly forth, invite the Crowd,
Search every Lane, and every Street,
And bring in all the Souls you meet.

Come then ye Souls by Sin opprest,
Ye restless Wanderers after Rest,
Ye Poor, and Maim'd, and Halt, and Blind,
In CHRIST an hearty Welcome find.

Sinners my gracious Lord receives,
Harlots, and Publicans, and Thieves,
Drunkards, and all the hellish Crew,
I have a Message now to You.

Come, and partake the Gospel-Feast,
Be sav'd from Sin, in JESUS rest,
O taste the Goodness of our God,
And eat his Flesh, and drink his Blood.

'Tis done; my All-redeeming Lord,
I have gone forth, and preach'd thy Word,
The Sinners to thy Feast are come,
And yet, O Saviour, there is Room.

Go then, my Lord, again injoin'd,
And other wand'ring Sinners find,
Go to the Hedges, and Highways,
And offer All my pard'ning Grace.

The Worst unto my Supper press,
Monsters of daring Wickedness,
Tell them my Grace for All is free,
They cannot be too bad for Me.

Tell them their Sins are all forgiven,
Tell every Creature under Heaven,
I died to save them from All Sin,
And force the Vagrants to come in.

Ye vagrant Souls, on You I call,
(O that my Voice could reach you All)
Ye all are freely Justified,
Ye All may live, for God hath died.

My Message as from God receive,
Ye all may come to CHRIST and live,
O let his Love your Hearts constrain,
Nor suffer Him to die in vain.

His Love is mighty to compel,
His conqu'ring Love consent to feel,
Yield to his Love's resistless Power,
And fight against your God no more.

See Him set forth before your Eyes,
Behold the Bleeding Sacrifice,
His offer'd Love make haste t' embrace,
And freely now be sav'd by Grace.

Ye who believe his Record true,
Shall sup with Him, and He with You:
Come to the Feast; be sav'd from Sin,
For JESUS waits to take you in.

This is the Time, no more delay,
This is the Acceptable Day,
Come in, this Moment, at his Call,
And live for Him who died for All.
(IV, 274-277)

Any congregation that sang this hymn in its entirety would certainly be forced to sit breathlessly as they heard the sermon! I am unable to account for the popularity of this hymn, but it has been frequently included in hymnals;[13] one is forced to the conclusion that Methodist congregations are not in awe of long hymns.

But is this an allegory? It could be called a dramatic monologue except for the fact that there are two speakers. It is certainly lively enough to be called hypotyposis, but then the hymn contains practically every type of imagery which Wesley commonly employed. The most glaring fault is his refusal to trust his art; he continually inserts "preachy" statements into the allegory, pointing out for retarded Christians the "spiritual" meanings of the "physical" symbols. In the line "Come to the Feast; be saved from Sin," for example, Wesley makes certain the fact that this is not an orgy involving real food, but that a metaphysical experience is involved. In effect, Wesley took the parables (or allegories) of Jesus (who rarely explained them) and "improved" them by carefully pointing out the "real" meaning.

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[13] Frank Baker in Representative Hymns (p. 146) lists the following collections which contain this hymn, but indicates that the list is not complete:
Madan's Collection (1760)
Collection (1780)
Pocket Hymn Book (1787)
Collection (1831)
Collection (1876)
Methodist Hymn Book (1904)
Methodist Hymn Book (1933)

Wesley's other hymns which contain this device are much shorter. The following example pictures a group of pilgrims on a journey, but once again Wesley is quick to point out for us that the physical journey is symbolic of a mystical destiny:

> Come on, my Partners in Distress,
> My Comrades thro' the Wilderness,
>   Who still your Bodies feel,
> A while forget your Griefs, and Fears,
> And look beyond the Vale of Tears
>   To that celestial Hill.
>
> Beyond the Bounds of Time, and Space,
> Look forward to that happy Place,
>   The Saints secure Abode,
> On Faith's strong Eagle Pinions rise,
> And force your Passage to the Skies,
>   And scale the Mount of God.
>
> See, where the Lamb in Glory stands,
> Incircled with his radiant Bands,
>   And join th' Angelic Powers,
> For all that Height of glorious Bliss
> Our everlasting Portion is,
>   And all that Heaven is Ours.
>
> Who suffer for our Master here,
> We shall before his Face appear,
>   And by his Side sit down:
> To Patient Faith the Prize is sure,
> And all, that to the End endure
>   The Cross, shall wear the Crown.

Thrice blessed bliss inspiring Hope!
It lifts the fainting Spirits up,
  It brings to life the Dead:
Our Conflicts here shall soon be past,
And you and I ascend at last
  Triumphant with our Head.

That great Mysterious Deity
We soon with open Face shall see:
  The Beatific Sight
Shall fill the Heavenly Courts with Praise,
And wide diffuse the golden Blaze
  Of Everlasting Light.

The Father shining on his Throne,
The glorious co-eternal Son,
  The Spirit one and seven,
Conspire our Rapture to compleat,
And lo! we fall before his Feet,
  And Silence heightens Heaven.

In hope of that Extatic Pause,
JESUS, we now sustain thy Cross,
  And at thy Footstool fall,
'Till Thou our hidden Life reveal,
'Till Thou our ravish'd Spirits fill,
  And God is All in All
(V, 168-169)

In this hymn Wesley begins with an allegory, but the last line in stanza one contains the word "celestial"; the physical journey then looks "Beyond the Bounds of Time, and Space," and Wesley preaches for four more stanzas until in the last stanza he suddenly wrenches the reader back to the original concept by reminding him that there is a cross to bear in this present journey.

In one hymn that stretches its long length out for twenty-seven stanzas Wesley inserts something which is very much like an allegory. Speaking of the Anglican Church he jumps into the metaphor of the vineyard:

Planted by thine Almighty Hand,
  Watered with Blood, the Vine took Root,
And spread throughout the happy Land,
  And fill'd the Earth with golden Fruit.

The Hills were cover'd with her Shade,
  Her branchy Arms extending wide
Their fair luxuriant Honours spread,
  And flourish'd as the Cedar's pride.

Her Boughs she stretch'd from Sea to Sea,
  And reach'd to frozen Scotia's shore,
(They once rever'd the Hierarchy,
  And bless'd the Mitre's Sacred Power).

Why then hast Thou abhor'd Thine own,
  And cast thy pleasant Plant away:
Broke down her Hedge, her Fence o'erthrown,
  And left her to the Beasts of Prey?

All that go by pluck off her Grapes,
  Our Sion of her Children spoil,
And Error in ten thousand shapes
  Would every gracious Soul beguile.

The Boar out of the German Wood[14]
  Tears up her Roots with baleful Power;
The Lion roaring for his Food,
  And all the Forest Beasts devour.

Deists, and Sectaries agree,
  And Calvin and Socinus join
To spoil the Apostolic Tree
  And Root and Branch destroy the Vine.
(VIII, 162-163)

At this point Wesley shifts into another metaphor, but it is obvious in this short example that Wesley had no qualms over inserting in his hymns a short rap or two at those who held opinions which conflicted with his own. No doubt it is poor stuff as far as allegories go, but it does reveal that had Wesley learned to unify this type of hymn he might have produced some effective allegory. The fact is that apart from "Wrestling Jacob" most of his attempts at allegory would give John Bunyan little cause to look to his laurels.

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[14] The Moravians.

CHAPTER V

REFERENTS OF WESLEY'S IMAGES

Although Charles Wesley chose to experiment with many types of images, metres, and structures in his hymns, his subject matter was strictly confined. This limitation is the result of his conviction that his work was at least partially a didactic instrument. This feeling was shared by his brother for as Louis Benson points out, "The hymns were a part of John Wesley's scheme of education. Behind the long succession of books was the single purpose of elevating the humble minds of his followers by the inspirations of poetry, and the unfailing conviction that in his brother's verse he had found his medium."[1] As Appendix C reveals, practically every facet of religious experience is captured in Wesley's imagery, and in this chapter I have classified the images into four groups. Those referents which are not related to religion are relatively unimportant; therefore, I have not discussed them at all, but all other referents are placed under one of the following classifications: the nature of God, the nature of man, the conversion experience, and the pilgrim experience. This latter term refers to religious experiences of the converted man. In Appendix C I have ranked the referents according to the number of times they appear in my sampling, but in my discussion I shall follow the order given above.

Wesley's hymns are so saturated with images which refer to God that accurate statistical tabulation is practically impossible. I have not included in my tables those images which lost their imagistic force long ago, such as King, Father, or Lord. Basically Wesley's hymns are Christ-centered, for as Appendix C indicates there are 303 references to Christ, 102 references to God the Father, and only 32 references to the Holy Spirit.

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[1] The Hymnody of the Christian Church, p. 112.

Although I have not included the many uses of the term "Father" in my study, it is evident that Wesley's imagery frequently leans heavily on this figure. As I pointed out in Chapter Four, Wesley's view of God was to a great extent anthropomorphic, and there are several hymns which revolve around this concept. In the following hymn the referent is to a forgiving father but Wesley manages to overcome the outworn figure by means of vivid imagery:

Thee, O my God and King,
My Father, Thee I sing!
Hear well-pleas'd the joyous Sound,
Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
Lost, I now in CHRIST am found,
Dead, by Faith in CHRIST I live.

Father, behold thy Son,
In CHRIST I am thy own.
Stranger long to Thee and Rest,
See the Prodigal is come:
Open wide thine Arms and Breast,
Take the weary Wand'rer home.

Thine Eye observ'd from far,
Thy Pity look'd me near:
Me thy Bowels yearn'd to see,
Me thy Mercy ran to find,
Empty, poor, and void of Thee,
Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind.

Thou on my Neck didst fall,
Thy Kiss forgave me all:
Still the gracious Words I hear,
Words that made the Saviour mine,

Haste for Him the Robe prepare,
His be Righteousness Divine.
(I, 96-97)

The imagery of this poem is drawn from the Bible, of course, but Wesley's lines are more vivid. "Open wide thine Arms and Breast,/ Take the weary Wand'rer home." A visual image stresses that part of God's nature which Wesley felt was the key to God-man relationship. Wesley's attempts to use the paternal figure to represent God were not always successful. Note that in the following hymn God is again a father, but there is little warmth or humanity in the image:

Glory to the Paternal God,
To Jesus lavish of his blood,
God over all supreme in power and grace,
And God the Holy Ghost with equal ardors praise,
Sing all on earth like those on high;
Let saints and angels magnify
One undivided God in persons three,
And lengthen out the song to all eternity!
(VII, 200)

For some reason Wesley could not write an effective hymn on the Trinity, and we see in this hymn that there is a blurred image--neither Father nor Son is clearly portrayed, and the Holy Ghost is only a name.

In Wesley's hymns God the Father is frequently referred to as "Friend," "Keeper," "Guide," "Fountain," or other terms which denote the benevolent aspect of His character; nevertheless, there is a vague, abstract quality when Wesley attempts this sort of thing. Wesley gives himself away in lines like "to th' Invisible I look" (XIII, 151), and "Will the Unsearchable be found?" (VII, 194), for God the Father, in Wesley's hymns (and particularly in his imagery) is a powerful Being and not the friendly Being that we find in Christ. Whenever Wesley writes of the Father's creative power, however, the imagery begins to develop and expand in a way that never happens when he writes of God's benevolent qualities.

> Author of every Work Divine
> Who dost thro' both Creations shine,
> The God of Nature and of Grace,
> Thy glorious Steps in all we see,
> And Wisdom attribute to Thee,
> And Power, and Majesty, and Praise.

The image of God as an "Author" does not have the warmth of images which refer to the Son, but the God of this hymn has a universal quality which Wesley's hymns often fail to manifest. The next stanza offers a new image, and the Holy Spirit subtly blends into the nature of the Father:

> Thou didst thy mighty Wings outspread,
> And brooding o'er the Chaos, shed
> Thy Life into th' impregn'd abyss,
> The Vital Principle infuse,
> And out of Nothing's Womb produce
> The Earth and Heaven, and all that is.

Wesley blends echoes from the Genesis story of creation into the New Testament imagery of the Holy Spirit as a dove, and somehow the gentle dove and the terrifying and awesome creative power blend in the lines. Biblical imagery is again utilized:

> That All-informing Breath Thou art
> Who dost Continued Life impart,
> And bidst the World persist to Be:
> Garnish'd by Thee yon azure Sky
> And all those beauteous Orbs on high
> Depend in Golden Chains from Thee.

God is the "Breath" (spirit), but Wesley chooses here to use one of his rare color impressions, "yon azure Sky," while the final image of the world tied to God by golden chains is effective for its visual imagery. The final stanzas stress the creative power of the Father:

Thou dost create the Earth anew,
(Its Maker and Preserver too)
  By thine Almighty Arm sustain;
Nature perceives thy secret Force,
And still holds on her even Course,
  And owns thy Providential Reign.

Thou art the Universal Soul,
The Plastick Power that fills the whole,
  And governs Earth, Air, Sea, and Sky,
The Creatures all, thy Breath receive,
And who by thy Inspiring live,
  Without thy Inspiration die.

Spirit immense, Eternal Mind,
Thou on the Souls of lost Mankind
  Dost with benignest Influence move,
Pleas'd to restore the ruin'd Race,
And new-create a World of Grace
  In all the Image of thy Love.
(IV, 198-199)

These last two stanzas represent the Deity of the Age of Reason. Pope and Emerson, no doubt, would have been delighted to sing them, but they are certainly not typical of Charles Wesley's verse. He did write several hymns of this type, but though they are excellent hymns, they were evidently not "human" enough to retain their places in most hymnals.

The destructive element of God's nature frequently controls Wesley's imagery, and as this is a facet of His power, Wesley can capture this quality effectively in images:

Arm of the Lord awake, awake!
  Thy immortal Strength put on.
With Terror cloath'd the Nations shake,
  And cast thy Foes, in Fury, down.
As in the antient Days appear!
  The Sacred Annals speak thy Fame:
Be now Omnipotently near,
  Thro' endless Ages still the same.

Thy tenfold Vengeance knew to quell,
  And humble haughty Rahab's Pride.

Groan'd her pale Sons thy Stroke to feel,
  The First-born Victims groan'd and died!
The wounded Dragon rag'd in vain;
  While bold thine Utmost Plague to brave,
Madly he dar'd the parted Main
  And sunk beneath th'o'erwhelming Wave.

He sunk; while Israel's chosen Race
  Triumphant urge their wondrous Way.
Divinely led the Favourites pass,
  Th' Unwatry Deep, and emptied Sea.
At Distance heap'd on either Hand,
  Yielding a strange unbeaten Road,
In Chrystal Walls the Waters stand,
  And own the Arm of Israel's God!

That Arm which is not short'ned now,
  Which wants not now the Power to save.
Still present with thy People Thou
  Bear'st them thro' Life's disparted Wave.
By Earth and Hell persued in vain,
  To Thee the ransom'd Seed shall come;
Shouting their Heav'nly Sion gain,
  And pass thro' Death triumphant home.
(IV, 302-303)

This last stanza is triumphant; God's people will be saved. But their salvation is the result of a God who destroys their enemies, and the love of God is absent from this hymn. One line in "O that I was as heretofore" (V, 105-106) indicates Wesley's attitude toward this aspect of God's being, for he prays to "The God who kills, and makes alive." The creating power of God and the destructive power of God stimulated Wesley's muse, for on either of these two subjects the images flow easily and powerfully.

The power of God the Father which fascinated Wesley all his life is constantly being contrasted with the mercy of God. God destroys, yes--but he is a God also of love, and Wesley's hymns frequently reflect the dichotomy which aroused the Calvinistic controversy of the eighteenth century. In Chapter Four I did not include irony as a type of non-comparative image, but *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* published by the Wesleys in 1741 abounds with this quality. The following hymn is long, but I have included it because it is an excellent example of that quality in Wesley's hymns which borders on satire.[2] Often printed under the title "The Horrible Decree," it reveals that Wesley felt that God's power--his destroying power--would not be directed against man unless the creature chose to defy God. It is Wesley's most vitriolic blast against Calvinism:

> Ah! gentle gracious Dove,
> And art Thou griev'd in me,
> That Sinners should restrain thy Love,
> And say, 'It is not free:
> 'It is not free for *All*:
> 'The *Most*, Thou *passest by*,
> 'And mockest with a fruitless Call
> 'Whom Thou hast doom'd to die.
>
> They think Thee *not sincere*
> In giving Each His Day,
> 'Thou only draw'st the Sinner near
> 'To cast him quite away,
> *To aggravate his Sin,*
> *His sure Damnation Seal*:
> *Thou shew'st him Heaven, and say'st, go in*--
> *And thrust's him into Hell*.
>
> *O HORRIBLE DECREE*
> Worthy of whence it came!

---

[2] This particular poem was one of the most effective weapons in the theological warfare against Calvinism. The title was a phrase used frequently by both John and Charles Wesley in their preaching. It was taken from Calvin's *Institutes*, Book III, chapter xxxiii, sect. 7: "How is it that the fall of Adam involves so many nations, with their infant children, in eternal death without remedy, unless that it so seemed meet to God? . . . The decree, I admit, is dreadful (*Decretum quidem horribile fateor*) and yet it is impossible to deny that God foreknew what the end of man was to be before He made him, and foreknew because He had so ordained by his decree" (Beveridge's translation, quoted by Dr. Osborn in Wesley's *Poetical Works*, III, xviii).

Forgive their hellish Blasphemy
Who charge it on the Lamb:
Whose Pity him inclin'd
To leave his Throne above,
The Friend, and Saviour of Mankind,
The God of Grace, and Love.

O gracious, loving Lord;
I feel thy Bowels yearn;
For those who slight the Gospel-Word
I share in thy Concern:
How art Thou griev'd to be
By ransom'd Worms withstood!
How dost Thou bleed afresh to see
Them trample on thy Blood!

To limit Thee they dare,
Blaspheme Thee to thy Face,
Deny their Fellow-Worms a Share
In thy redeeming Grace:
All for their very own they take,
Thy righteousness engross,
Of none Effect to most they make
The Merits of thy Cross.

Sinners, abhor the Fiend,
His *other* Gospel hear,
The God of Truth did not intend
The Thing his Words declare,
He offers Grace to All,
Which most cannot embrace
Mock'd with an ineffectual Call
And insufficient Grace.

The righteous God consign'd
Them over to their Doom,
And sent the Saviour of Mankind
To damn them from the Womb;
To damn for falling short,
Of what they could not do,
For not believing the Report
Of that which was not true.

The God of Love pass'd by
The most of those that fell,
Ordain'd poor Reprobates to die,
And forc'd them into Hell.
He did not do the deed
(Some have more mildly rav'd,)
He did not damn them--but decreed
They never should be saved.

He did not Them bereave
Of Life, or stop their Breath,
His Grace He only would not give,
And starv'd their Souls to death.
Satanick Sophistry!
But still All-gracious God,
They charge the Sinner's Death on Thee,
Who bought'st him with thy blood.

They think with Shrieks and Cries
To please the Lord of Hosts,
And offer Thee, in Sacrifice
Millions of slaughter'd Ghosts:
With New-born Babes they fill
The dire infernal Shade,
For such they say, was thy Great Will,
Before the World was made.

How long, O God, how long
Shall Satan's Rage proceed!
Wilt Thou not soon avenge the Wrong,
And crush the Serpent's Head!
Surely Thou shalt at last
Bruise him beneath our Feet:
The Devil and his Doctrine cast
Into the burning Pit.

Arise, O God, arise,
Thy glorious Truth maintain,
Hold forth the Bloody Sacrifice
For every Sinner slain!
Defend thy Mercy's Cause,
Thy Grace divinely free,
Lift up the Standard of thy Cross,
Draw all Men unto Thee.

O vindicate thy Grace
Which every Soul may prove,
Us in thy Arms of Love embrace,
Of everlasting Love.
Give us the pure Gospel-Word,
Thy Preachers multiply,
Let all confess their Common Lord,
And dare for Him to die.

My Life I here present,
My Heart's last Drop of Blood,
O let it all be freely spent
In Proof that Thou art Good,
Art Good to all that breathe,
Who All may Pardon have:

Thou willest not the Sinner's Death,
  But all the World wouldst save.

  O take me at my Word,
  But arm me with thy Power,
Then call me forth to suffer, Lord,
  To meet the fiery Hour:
  In Death will I proclaim
  That all may hear thy Call,
And clap my Hands amidst the Flame,
  And Shout--HE DIED FOR ALL.
                (III, 34-38)

The hymn begins with a soft sigh: "Ah! gentle gracious Dove," but this image is thrown against a caricature of the Calvinistic God--angry, baleful, hateful, and vengeful. The irony cuts deeply in the last four lines of stanza two, but the picture of Christ "The Friend, and Saviour of Mankind,/ The God of Grace, and Love" serves to remind the singer that God is love after all. The unfortunate choice of "Bowels" for "heart" dulls the edge of the first half of the third stanza, but the worm imagery is both forceful and ludicrous. Something about "Fellow-Worms" or "ransom'd Worms" serves in this case to ridicule the doctrine of Calvinism. The frightful imagery in stanza ten with its "Millions of slaughter'd Ghosts" reveals Wesley's anger, for in the eleventh stanza he appears quite willing to assist God, not only "to crush the Serpent's Head," but to cast the devout Calvinists into the burning Pit with his bare hands. The rest of the hymn urges the love of God as man's hope, and insists that life must be spent in His service, but this is an angry hymn filled with violent images. The purpose, however, is to prove God's everlasting love, and once again we note that Wesley was more successful when he wrote of God's wrath than of his milder aspects; in this composition, the effect is achieved by contrast, through images of what God is not. This hymn casts light on Wesley's concept of the nature of man as well as the nature of God. Rattenbury insists that Wesley utterly rejected election: "The Calvinist God, he held, was one of hate, not love; His anger was not the wrath of the Lamb which is the righteous anger of love and innocence, but sheer diabolical fury. . . . A doctrine which asserted that God could deliberately create countless millions of human beings with the purpose of burning them in hell fire everlastingly, in the opinion of Charles Wesley, debased God; Also he thought . . . that the reduction of men and women to the status of mere automata, the playthings of a capricious and cruel Omnipotence, degraded man."[3] The imagery of Wesley's hymns bears out this view, and I shall refer to this hymn in dealing with the nature of man and the nature of the conversion experience.

Wesley's imagery is more effective in the hymns which refer to Christ than in those which refer to the Father, for his religion was Christo-centric. Philosophical speculation about God left him cold. His intellectual search for God was in and through Jesus Christ; therefore, it is quite natural that the imagery of his hymns should abound with references to the Son. Only 85 of the 300 hymns studied failed to have at least one figure which could refer to Christ, and almost three-fourths of all images relating to God have Christ as a referent. References such as "Prince of Peace," "Sun of Righteousness," "King," "Redeemer," and "Lamb of God" occur so frequently that it would be difficult to count them. I have not included these more traditional terms in my study, but I shall point out several instances of Wesley's ability to take these traditional images and use them in such a way that they become quite forceful.

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[3] Evangelical Doctrines, pp. 121-122.

"O Filial Deity" is one example of Wesley's fondness for combining figures of speech in series, all of which illustrate some aspect of Christ's character or office. Note the montage in the following hymn:

O Filial Deity,
Accept my New-born Cry!
See the Travail of thy Soul,
Saviour, and be satisfy'd;
Take me now, possess me whole,
Who for Me, for Me hast dy'd!

Wesley's theology is slightly confused in this stanza, for according to the scripture, the Father would see the travail of the Suffering Servant; however, this is only one more case in which Wesley allows the First and Second Persons of the Godhead to flow into each other. In the second stanza Christ is the tree or the vine:

Of Life Thou art the Tree,
My Immortality!
Feed this Tender Branch of thine,
Ceaseless Influence derive,
Thou the true, the heav'nly Vine,
Grafted into Thee I live.

In the next stanza--a fountain:

Of Life the Fountain Thou,
I know--I feel it Now!
Faint and dead no more I droop:
Thou art in me: Thy Supplies
Ev'ry Moment springing up
Into Life Eternal rise.

Then:

Thou the Good Shepherd art,
From Thee I ne'er shall part:

Thou my Keeper and my Guide,
  Make me still thy Tender Care,
Gently lead me by thy Side,
  Sweetly in thy Bosom bear.

In this stanza the ancient figure of the Shepherd first leads the lamb, then holds it in his Bosom. Then yet another image:

  Thou art my Daily Bread;
  O CHRIST, Thou art my Head:
Motion, virtue, strength to Me,
  Me thy Living Member flow;
Nourish'd I, and fed by Thee,
  Up to Thee in all things grow.

With this stanza Wesley's imagery falls to pieces. Christ is the "Daily Bread"; however, in the next line he is suddenly the "Head" and the "flow" from the head to the members is more closely related to the "Tree" or "vine" image, especially in view of the last line. "Nourish'd I" could more logically refer to the "Bread" image, of course. Wesley, however, ignores these incongruities and begins bravely with another image in stanza six:

  Prophet, to me reveal
  Thy Father's perfect Will.
Never Mortal spake like Thee,
  Human Prophet like Divine;
Loud and strong their Voices be,
  Small and still and inward Thine!

Then another:

  On Thee my Priest I call,
  Thy Blood aton'd for all.
Still the Lamb as slain appears,
  Still Thou stand'st before the Throne.
Each off'ring up thy Pray'rs,
  These presenting with thy own.

The syntax of the last two lines is baffling. Who is "Each," and who are "These"? But there is one final image:

JESU! Thou art my King,
  From Thee my Strength I bring!
Shadow'd by thy mighty Hand,
  Saviour, who shall pluck me thence?
Faith supports, by Faith I stand,
  Strong as thy Omnipotence.
(I, 97)

Perhaps the kindest thing one could say about this rather cluttered hymn is that Charles Wesley did not frequently spawn images to this degree.

The images in Charles Wesley's nativity hymns[4] are usually either very good or very bad. In Chapter Four I indicated that he used paradox repeatedly--too often by far--but in the following hymn the imagery and the general sense impressions are quite good:

Glory be to God on high,
  And Peace on Earth descend;
God comes down: He bows the Sky:
  He shews himself our Friend!
God th' Invisible appears,
  God the Blest, the Great I Am
Sojourns in this Vale of Tears,
  And Jesus is his Name.

Him the Angels all ador'd
  Their Maker and their King:
Tidings of their Humbled Lord
  They now to Mortals bring:
Emptied of his Majesty,
  Of His dazling Glories shorn,
Beings Source begins to Be,
  And God himself is Born!

See th' Eternal Son of God
  A Mortal Son of Man,
Dwelling in an Earthy Clod
  Whom Heaven cannot contain!
Stand amaz'd ye Heavens at This!
  See the Lord of Earth and Skies
Humbled to the Dust He is,
  And in a Manger lies!

---

[4] Charles Wesley published at least a dozen small hymn pamphlets and left others in manuscript. Baker points out (Representative Hymns, p. 53) that John advised Charles to leave out several of the hymns because they were too "namby-pambical."

We the Sons of Men rejoice,
  The Prince of Peace proclaim,
With Heaven's Host lift up our Voice,
  And shout Immanuel's Name;
Knees and Hearts to Him we bow;
  Of our Flesh, and of our Bone
Jesus is our Brother now
  And God is all our own!
(IV, 108-109)

Paradox is the most significant factor, of course, and it is quite skilfully used. "God th' Invisible appears," "See th' Eternal Son of God/ A Mortal Son of Man,/ Dwelling in an Earthy Clod." This is as paradoxical as one can get. The visual imagery is vivid in the first stanza, and there is an impact of sound with the word "shout" in the last stanza.

The significant thing about the imagery of this hymn is that God is taken out of the realm of metaphysical abstraction; he ceases to be remote from men, but chooses to dwell with mankind. This is the key to most of Wesley's imagery referring to Christ, for to Wesley Christ is God, but He is the human form of God, dwelling for a short time in a human tabernacle, a heavenly visitant with a heavenly purpose to which all other things are to be subordinated. "The attempt is made," Rattenbury tells us, "to give an account of Jesus such as a first-century photographer or a contemporary shorthand reporter, had they existed, might by their respective mediums have rendered; that by such processes a picture not without its own values has sometimes been made need not be denied, although to those who write of Jesus from the standpoint of faith and experience it will always necessarily be impoverished."[5]

This "portrait" of Christ certainly exists in the hymns of Wesley. He wrote many hymns on the birth of Christ, but even more frequently his hymns reflect the figure of Christ the Saviour as He fulfills His mission. There are numerous images reflecting the Christian as he draws strength from Christ:

Closer knit to Thee our Head,
Nourish us, O CHRIST, and feed,
Let us daily Growth receive,
More and more in JESUS live:
JESU! we Thy Members are:
Cherish us with kindest Care,
Of Thy Flesh, and of Thy Bone:
Love, forever love Thine own.
(I, 361)

In at least fifty hymns Christ is imagistically portrayed as the fulfillment of some human need. There is a cry for help, as in the following hymn, and only Christ can rescue the needy penitent:

When, dearest Lord, when shall it be,
That I shall find my All in Thee;
The Fulness of Thy Promise prove,
The Seal of Thine Eternal Love!

A poor, blind Child I wander here
If haply I may feel Thee near,
O dark, dark, dark (I still must say)
Amidst the Blaze of Gospel-Day.

Thee, only Thee I fain would find,
I cast the World, and Flesh behind,
Thou, only Thou to me be given
Of all Thou hast in Earth or Heaven.

All Earthly Comforts I disdain,
They shall not rob me of my Pain,
Or make me senseless of my Load
Or less disconsolate for God.

---

[5] Evangelical Doctrines, p. 157.

Rather let all the Creatures take
Their Miserable Comforts back,
With every vain Relief depart,
And leave me to my Broken Heart.

Leave me, my Friends, the Mourner leave,
For God, and not for you I grieve;
My Weakness, O ye Strong, despise,
My foolish Ignorance, ye Wise.

Let all my Father's Children be
Still angry, still displeas'd with me,
Disclaim, dishonour, and disown:
I would be poor, forlorn, alone.

A Child, a Fool, a Thing of nought,
Abhor'd neglected, and forgot,
Condemn'd, abandon'd, and distrest
Till I from Mortal Man have ceas'd.

When from the Arm of Flesh set free,
JESU, my Soul shall fly to Thee:
JESU, when I have lost my All,
My Soul shall on thy Bosom fall.

When Man forsakes, Thou wilt not leave,
Ready the Outcasts to receive,
Thou all my Simpleness I own,
And all my Faults to thee are known.

Ah' wherefore did I ever doubt?
Thou wilt in no wise cast me out,
An helpless Soul that comes to Thee
With only Sin and Misery.

Lord, I am sick; my Sickness cure:
I want; do Thou enrich the Poor:
Under Thy mighty Hand I stoop,
O lift the abject Sinner up!

Lord, I am blind: be Thou my Sight:
Lord, I am weak, be Thou my Might:
An Helper of the Helpless be,
And let me find my All in Thee.
(II, 258-259)

The most glaring blemish is the over-long introduction. Wesley sets the stage by wallowing in melancholy, and he goes too far (Wesley read Blair's _Grave_, Gray's _Elegy_ and Harvey's _Meditations among the Tombs_ far too much), but he makes his point perfectly clear--he needs help, and the arm of flesh will not avail. In stanza nine he turns to Jesu, and the rest of the hymn is a series of images--sickness, blindness, weakness--with only Christ to aid.

A far better hymn than this, one that has unified imagery, is the following:

> Jesus, to Thee I would look up,
>   Tost in a Storm of Passion,
> Thou art the Anchor of my Hope,
>   Thou art my strong Salvation:
> Pity and save a Soul, distrest
>   Till I the Port recover;
> O that I in thy Wounds might rest,
>   Till all the storm is over.
>
> Great is the Storm that works within,
>   Jesus his Grace is greater:
> Thou art above the Power of Sin,
>   Thou art the God of Nature:
> Speak: & at thy supream Command
>   Trouble & Sin shall leave me.
> Stir up thy Strength, stretch out thine Hand,
>   Say 'It is I', and save me.
>
> Give me this Hour thy Help to find,
>   Shew me thy Great Salvation,
> So will I call on All Mankind
>   In loving Admiration,
> O what a Man, a God, is This!
>   Nature is still'd before Him,
> Lo! at his Word the Winds & Seas
>   Suddenly calm'd adore Him.
>
> (XIII, 253)

The inner "storm" is vividly painted as an actual storm at sea, and Wesley's audience must have thought of the several occasions when Christ was in a physical storm. The end of the first stanza deviates as Wesley wavers toward the "Blood and Wounds" school, but in stanza two the storm figure is resumed; Christ is "The God of Nature" and able to still the physical tempest. But it is reserved for stanza three to make the application, and in this case Wesley does not overstep his art--that is, he does not preach at the reader, nor does he point out that the physical storm is only the symbol of man's inner turmoil. Very effectively he speaks only of the physical action of the sea: "Lo! at his Word the Winds & Seas/ Suddenly calm'd adore Him." Wesley could have been a better poet if he had learned to trust his art and his audience as he did in this case.

The most famous (or infamous) figure in all hymnody is immersion in blood. I have indicated that Wesley at one time was strongly inclined to adopt the excessive diction and imagery of the Moravians, but resisted the impulse. In many cases, however, he fell back on this type of imagery and while Mabel Brailsford's contention is that in Wesley's hymns "the image of the wounds and blood of Christ recurs with a sickening frequency, more suitable to the visions of a savage witch-doctor than of an English divine,"[6] it appears to me that Wesley used more than ordinary restraint with this image. The blood was central to his theology, and we find it in many hymns such as the following:

> Conscious of all that I have done,
>   Of evils to the world unknown,
>   My punishment I feel,
> Driven out from my Creator's face,
>   I carry my own hell.

The image is biblical, of course, but "I carry my own hell" is Wesley's addition and a very good one adding to the impact of the entire image.

> Remembrance shakes her whip severe,
> Her scorpion whip of guilty fear,
>   Of sad remorse and shame;

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[6] *A Tale of Two Brothers* (New York, 1952), p. 144.

But from myself I cannot fly,
Or find one drop of comfort nigh,
  To cool this scorching flame.

The "scorpion whip" is very effective in its impact; however, Wesley shifts in the last two lines from Cain to the Rich Man Who Went to Hell. In the next two stanzas, Wesley offers the blood as the panacea for the sufferer's need:

Jesus, my only Hope Thou art;
Sprinkle thy blood upon my heart,
  And make its troubles cease;
Thy blood the wounded conscience heals,
Thy blood the sinner's pardon seals,
  And bids me die in peace.

Faith in thy blood if Thou bestow,
The sting of guilt no more I know,
  The self-tormenting mind;
I plunge me in th' oblivious floud,
I wash away my sinful load,
  And leave myself behind.

Help then my desperate unbelief,
Appear, to end my sin and grief,
  With all thy sounds confest,
Thy love on Calvary display,
And bear my ransom'd soul away
  To that eternal Rest.
(XIII, 144-145)

Two images, or perhaps three, are employed in the last two stanzas, and in some respects they are superior to most of the "Blood and Wounds" school of imagery. First, the image of blood applied, or sprinkled as a cure for sickness is drawn into the realm of the spiritual by the use of the phrase "on my heart." Second, the "wounded conscience" is not physical. The final image is slightly different from the usual "Are-you-washed-in-the-blood" image by virtue of the fact that there is a psychological transformation resulting from the action--"And leave myself behind." This is, I think, original, and it is superior to conventional images of washing in blood used by most hymn writers of the day. There is in Wesley's hymns no "eroticism combined with a Goyaesque dwelling on the details of torture and anguish"[7] which C. J. Abbey points out in Crashaw's religious poems. It is necessary to remember that emphasis on the physical details of the crucifixion--the broken body and the blood--was common in the eighteenth-century hymnody. It was the fastidious and gentlemanly Cowper who wrote:

> There is a fountain fill'd with blood
>   Drawn from Emmanuel's veins,
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood
>   Lose all their guilty stains.

And it was the gentle Isaac Watts who wrote:

> See from His head, His hands, His feet,
>   Sorrow and love flow mingled down. . . .

This imagery is woven into the texture of much of Charles Wesley's work; it cannot be tampered with, and we must accept it as a limitation or an asset depending upon our own taste. The conception of the Saviourhood of Jesus is undoubtedly that of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53, and to Charles Wesley the humanity of Christ is predominantly suffering humanity--thus the emphasis on the physical suffering. His conception of God as Christ is, as I have pointed out, anthropomorphic, but Wesley believed that God did indeed become man in Christ, and the humanity of Christ is realized not only in his suffering but in every relation of His life on earth. Sometimes Wesley's Christ has been criticized as too sentimentally conceived, as when he wrote:

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[7] _Religious Thought in Old English Verse_ (n.p., 1892), p. 145.

Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child,

but any careful study of his work will reveal vigour as well as gentleness in the imagery. Strength is indeed the most common characteristic which Wesley assigns to Christ.

Jesus the Prisoner's fetters breaks
And bruises Satan's head.

or:

Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee.

And even more strength is in the following:

Jesus! formidable name
Puts all the fiends to flight.

In hymns such as "Lo! He comes with clouds discending" (VI, 143-144) Wesley leaves the earthly life of Jesus and the imagery becomes awesome:

Lo! He comes with clouds discending,
  Once for favour'd sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints attending,
  Swell the triumph of his strain:
    Hallelujah,
  God appears, on earth to reign!

Every eye shall now behold Him
  Rob'd in dreadful majesty,
Those who set at nought and sold Him,
  Pierc'd, and nail'd Him to the tree,
    Deeply wailing
  Shall the true Messiah see.

The dear tokens of his passion
  Still his dazling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
  To his ransom'd worshippers;
    With what rapture
  Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! let all adore Thee
  High on thine eternal throne

Saviour, take the power and glory
  Claim the kingdom for thine own:
    JAH, JEHOVAH,
  Everlasting God, come down.
(VI, 143-144)

No longer does the imagery reflect the physical details of Christ's body except by use of words like "rob'd in dreadful majesty," "dazling body," or "glorious scars." The imagery is drawn from a court, and a king reigns in awesome pomp. In the following hymn this imagery is retained as Christ sits at the right hand of God in heaven:

Rejoice, the Lord is King!
  Your Lord and King adore,
Mortals, give Thanks, and sing,
  And triumph evermore;
Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,

  Jesus the Saviour reigns,
  The God of Truth and Love,
When He had purg'd our Stains,
  He took his Seat above:
Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,
Rejoice, again, I say, rejoice.

His Kingdom cannot fail,
  He rules o'er Earth and Heaven;
The Keys of Death and Hell
  Are to our JESUS given:
Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,
Rejoice, again, I say rejoice.

He sits at God's Right-hand,
  Till all his Foes submit,
And bow to his Command,
  And fall beneath His Feet.
Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,
Rejoice, again, I say, Rejoice.

He all his Foes shall quell,
  Shall all our Sins destroy,
And every Bosom swell,
  With pure Seraphic Joy;
Lift up your Heart, lift up your Voice,
Rejoice, again, I say Rejoice.

Rejoice in Glorious Hope,
  JESUS the Judge shall come;
And take his Servants up
  To their Eternal Home:
We soon shall hear th' archangel's Voice,
The Trump of God shall sound, Rejoice.
(IV, 140-141)

The imagery of this hymn reflects the victory of Christ over powers and principalities. He is a "King," he "reigns," He has "the Keys of Death and Hell," and all his "Foes shall submit." There is no trace of the Christ who grew weary or who suffered humiliation on earth.

A third group of images in Wesley's hymns refers to the Holy Spirit; I have tabulated only 32 in Appendix C, but much of Wesley's best poetry falls into this group. The following is a typical hymn on this subject:

Come, Holy Ghost, our Hearts inspire,
  Let us Thine influence prove,
Source of the Old Prophetic Fire,
  Fountain of Light and Love.

Come Holy Ghost, for moved by Thee
  The Prophets wrote and spoke;
Unlock the Truth, Thyself the Key,
  Unseal the Sacred Book.

Expand Thy wings, Celestial Dove,
  Brood o'er our Nature's Night;
On our disordered Spirits move,
  And let there now be Light.

God through Himself, we then shall know,
  If Thou within us shine,
And sound, with all Thy Saints, below,
  The depths of Love Divine.
(I, 238-239)

The train of imagery is not difficult to follow. First, there is the source of prophetic fire. The second stanza contains the statement of one function of the Holy Spirit--He is "the Key" which can "Unseal the

Sacred Book." The third stanza begins with a daring imaginative flight, back to the creation of the world, but in the fourth stanza the thought returns to the earth and ends with a metaphor from sailing--we are by the help of the Holy Spirit to "sound the depths of Love Divine."

The image of the third stanza occurs in "Author of every Work Divine" in even more powerful imagery--perhaps the best single stanza Wesley ever wrote:

> Thou didst thy mighty Wings outspread,
> And brooding o'er the Chaos, shed
>   Thy Life into th' impregn'd Abyss,
> The Vital Principle infuse,
> And out of Nothing's Womb produce
>   The Earth and Heaven, and all that is.
> (IV, 198)

Wesley's debt to Milton is obvious; there can be little doubt that the imagery in the stanza above is derived from Paradise Lost. It is interesting to note that Wesley dips into Book I for the imagery of the first four lines then borrows from Book II for the "Womb" image of the last two lines. Speaking of the Spirit Milton says:

> And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
> Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
> Instruct me, for Thou Know'st; Thou from the first
> Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
> Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,
> And mad'st it pregnant. . . .
> (I, 17-22)

The last two lines of Wesley's hymn echo the imagery of Milton's phrase "Into this wild Abyss,/ The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave . . ." (II, 910-911). Both men are writing on exactly the same subject, and Wesley shows extremely good taste in his decision to borrow from Milton.

In one of his hymns Wesley piles up all the functions of the

Holy Spirit; no better approach to his imagery in this area could be found:

Hear, Holy Spirit, hear,
My Inward Comforter!
Loos'd by Thee my stamm'ring Tongue
First essays to praise Thee now,
This the New, the Joyful Song,
Hear it in thy Temple Thou!

Long o'er my Formless Soul
The dreary Waves did roll;
Void I lay and sunk in Night:
Thou, the overshadowing Dove,
Call'dst the Chaos into Light,
Bad'st me Be, and live, and love.

Thee I exult to Feel,
Thou in my Heart dost dwell:
There Thou bear'st thy Witness true,
Shed'st the Love of God abroad;
I in Christ a Creature New,
I, ev'n I am Born of God!

Ere yet the Time was come
To fix in Me thy Home,
With me oft Thou didst reside:
Now, my God, Thou In me art!
Here Thou ever shalt abide;
One we are, no more to part.

Fruit of the Saviour's Pray'r,
My Promis'd Comforter!
Thee the World cannot receive,
Thee they neither know nor see,
Dead is all the Life they live,
Dark their Light, while void of Thee.

Yet I partake thy Grace
Thro' CHRIST my Righteousness;
Mine the Gifts Thou dost impart,
Mine the Unction from above,
Pardon written on my Heart,
Light, and Life, and Joy, and Love.

Thy Gifts, Blest Paraclete,
I glory to repeat:
Sweetly Sure of Grace I am,
Pardon to my Soul apply'd,
Int'rest in the spotless Lamb;
Dead for All, for me He dy'd.

  Thou art Thyself the Seal;
  I more than Pardon feel,
Peace, Unutterable Peace,
  Joy that Ages ne'er can move,
Faith's Assurance, Hope's Increase,
  All the Confidence of Love!

  Pledge of thy Promise giv'n,
  My Antepast of Heav'n;
Earnest Thou of Joys Divine,
  Joys divine on Me bestow'd,
Heav'n and CHRIST and All is mine,
  All the plenitude of God.

  Thou art My Inward Guide,
  I ask no Help beside:
Arm of God, to Thee I call,
  Weak as Helpless Infancy!
Weak I am--yet cannot fall
  Stay'd by Faith, and led by Thee!

  Hear, Holy Spirit, hear,
  My Inward Comforter!
Loos'd by Thee my stamm'ring Tongue
  First essays to praise Thee now;
This the New, the Joyful Song,
  Hear it in thy Temple Thou!
(I, 99-101)

All the images in Wesley's hymns referring to the Holy Spirit are variations on one of the figures in this hymn. The Holy Spirit is a "Comforter" and a creator; He visits man and makes His home there; He gives gifts unto man; He is the "earnest" of other promises; He is the "seal" that assures man of God's promises. He is the light-bringer to a world of darkness.

One very fine work on this aspect of the Holy Spirit is Arthur S. Yates' The Doctrine of Assurance (London, 1952). Though it is a theological work, the chapter titled "The Spirit's Witness in Charles Wesley's Hymns" traces the imagery which reflects the functions of the Holy Spirit. He lists over thirty examples of Wesley's imagery which reflect the doctrine of assurance as it is connected to the Holy Spirit.

In Wesley's hymns it is evident that God the Father plays a role far less important than that of Christ, even than that of the Holy Spirit. The humanity of Christ, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the power of God the Father dominate the imagery in this section.

Before analysing those images which refer to the nature of man, it might be well to look at the word "nature" itself. A concordance of Charles Wesley's hymns, if there were one, would list a large and varied number of entries under this word. It is a key to his mind, perhaps to the mind of the age, and certainly to the imagery in his hymns.

The "nature" of which Wesley speaks so often is not the subject matter of so many "nature-hymns"; neither is it the stock material of the Sunday School Primary Department. It is rather what we would call "human nature," though that is a phrase Wesley seldom used. Human nature at its worst and its best is his preoccupation, and he calls it simply "nature." In nothing is the cleavage between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries so marked as in our attitude toward "nature." Today we see human nature as a small, though not for us trivial, part of a very much bigger thing, nature as a whole. Man we see to be but a creature of yesterday; nature--the material world in the background--is far, far older. Man can therefore only be properly understood against this background of the nature or material reality that has given him birth. In the eighteenth century, despite the discovery of astronomy, man was still very much the center of things:

And all beside are serving him,
That he may serve his God.
(VI, 213)

Belief in God as the center of things and the grand explanation of things was still very real, and man's relation to God and not to his material environment was the thing that chiefly mattered. In the light of this consideration, "nature" (that is, human nature) was the problem of problems, and one which is as great today. There are two commonplaces abroad today which were also common in the eighteenth century: one that human nature must be changed, and the other that it is ever the same and incapable of change. Charles Wesley agrees heartily with the first, but he emphatically denies the second. The essence of his gospel, the motif running through all his hymns is that though human nature is bad, it can most gloriously be changed to unthinkable good. If there is a nature within us which is the enemy of God, there is also a Divine nature available for us in Christ, if only we sufficiently want it.

These two contrasting "natures" are prominent everywhere in the hymns. In Appendix C I have listed 138 references to the fallen nature of man and 105 references to the Divine or "redeem'd" nature of man.

Man in his natural or "fallen" state is in a hell of a condition. This statement is not profane, for Wesley's images reveal that man's spiritual condition on earth is closely related to his physical state in hell. Darkness, agony, fear, and other qualities associated with the inferno are the sinner's portion on earth. He may be "dissolved in Ease" (IV, 445), but he dwells in "Shades of Death" (IV, 116) and is "sunk in night" (I, 99). The "Stony Hearts" (V, 63) of the "Reprobate Race" (IV, 119) that "degenerate Crowd, hardened Sons of Pride" (IV, 15), "have bartered Earth for Heaven" (I, 74); the fallen man, "sinful dust and ashes" (I, 92), is the "prey of Sin" (I, 74). Not only is he "vulgar, obscure, unknown,/ ignorant and poor" (VIII, 148), not only is he a "Clod" (IV, 108), but he is a worm! All his attempts to lift himself are futile:

> Ah, wretched souls, who lifted up
> By Satan to the temple's top,
>   The highest, holiest place,
> Look down with scorn on all below,
> Your own superior virtue show,
>   Your own consummate grace!
>
> Whom God exalts, he humbles too:
> But devilish pride hath blinded you
>   Who your perfection boast:
> The fiend hath set you up on high,
> And casts you down in sin to die,
>   To die forever lost.
>
> While yet on ruin's verge ye stand,
> Beneath Jehovah's mighty hand
>   Your towering selves abase;
> Cast yourselves down at Jesus' word,
> Own, ye vile worms, before the Lord
>   Your utter sinfulness.
>
> Crawl on the earth, nor ever more
> At Satan's instigation soar
>   Above the clouds to sit;
> Humility your whole delight,
> And your ambition's utmost height
>   To weep at Jesus' feet.
> (V, 124-125)

Actually Wesley uses "worms" only six times to refer to fallen nature, and even these have been changed in some modern hymnals.

Most of the images which refer to the sinner's condition fall under one of five general areas: prison, slavery, sickness, politics, and travel.

Twenty-seven times we read that the fallen man is a prisoner. He is a "Captive" (VII, 24), a "foul Offender" (III, 6), "bound in

Prison" (VI, 193), "fast bound in sin" (XI, 55), "In Bands of Death" (I, 99), and an "Imprison'd Spirit" (I, 105). The following is typical of the extended metaphors which Wesley frequently inserts in his hymns:

> Long my imprison'd Spirit lay,
>   Fast bound in Sin and Nature's Night:
> Thine Eye diffus'd a quick'ning Ray;
>   I woke; the Dungeon flam'd with Light;
> My Chains fell off, my Heart was free,
> I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
>   (I, 106)

But the sinner is not only a prisoner; twenty-two times he is referred to in terms of slavery. He is a "Slave" (I, 91), "a Slave of Excess" (V, 282), "a trembling Slave of sin" (V, 105), he is "in Thrall" (VI, 177), and he lives "in the House of Bondage" (VIII, 241). He has all the problems of a slave--"a burdened soul" (IV, 116), "a struggling soul," (III, 228), and "a Load of Sin" (I, 91) to bear. Three times this image is drawn from the Bible; the following refers to the Hebrews in their Egyptian bondage:

> I too have done the same;
>   Yet not, O Lord, to me,
> The praise be to thy name,
>   Which set the captive free:
> Free from sin's Egyptian yoke,
> To th' Invisible I look,
> And see my Great Redeemer stand,
> My Leader to the heavenly land.
>   (XIII, 151)

The following stanzas clearly reflect the sinner's plight in terms of prison imagery:

>   Redeem'd from all his Woes,
>   Out of his Dungeon freed,
>   Ask, how the Prisoner knows
>   That he is free indeed!
> How can He tell the Gloom of Night
>   From the Meridian Blaze?

Or I discern the Glorious Light,
  That streams from JESU's Face?

  By Sin no longer bound,
    The Prisoner is set free,
  The Lost again is found
    In Paradise, in Thee:
In Darkness, chains, and Death I was,
  But lo! to Life restor'd,
Into thy wondrous Light I pass,
  The Freeman of the Lord.
(V, 365)

Sickness is used seventeen times to refer to the condition of fallen man; frequently this imagery becomes quite sickening in itself, as in "A filthy, leprous nature" (IX, 123). Quite often Wesley simply lists the ailments in series as in "Poor, and Maim'd, and Halt, and Blind" (IIV, 274) or "Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind" (I, 96). The familiar scene of the sick coming to Christ for healing is used three times, as in the following:

  When the gospel of grace
  Is proclaim'd in our days,
  From all places around
What a multitude flock to the life-giving sound!
  To the church they repair;
  For Jesus is there
  In his virtue to heal,
And ready his love in their hearts to reveal.

  The desperate crowd
  With infirmites bow'd
  Sick of every sin,
And vex'd with a legion of spirits unclean
  The Physician attend,
  And his goodness commend,
  Who his patients relieves,
And a pardon to all the incurable gives.
(XII, 186-187)

In the last line Wesley throws in a legal image, "pardon," which is poor technique, but the "scene" is quite vivid. Blindness is the most common metaphor in this area, and usually light-darkness imagery controls the hymn as in the following stanzas:

> Visit then this Soul of mine,
>   Pierce the Gloom of Sin, and Grief,
> Fill me, Radiancy Divine,
>   Scatter all my Unbelief,
> More and more Thyself display
> Shining to the Perfect Day.
>   (I, 224)

The darkness of the soul must be dispersed by the action of the Holy Spirit:

> Expand Thy Wings, Prolific Dove,
>   Brood o'er our Nature's Night;
> On our disorder'd Spirits move,
>   And let there now be Light.
>   (I, 238)

Sometimes the blindness is a real physical infirmity:

> A poor, blind Child I wander here
> If haply I may feel Thee near,
> O dark, dark, dark (I still must say)
> Amidst the Blaze of Gospel-Day.
>   (II, 258)

Either this stanza or the following may be Wesley's most effective poetic statement in this area:

> Light of those whose dreary Dwelling
>   Borders on the Shades of Death,
> Come, and by thy Love's revealing
>   Dissipate the Clouds beneath:
> The new Heaven and Earth's Creator,
>   In our deepest Darkness rise,
> Scattering all the night of Nature,
>   Pouring Eye-sight on our Eyes.
>   (IV, 116-117)

Sixteen times man is referred to through political imagery. He is a "rebel" (III, 301) and an "alien" (IV, 317). He is "foe to God" (IV, 317), he has "forfeited Favour" (IV, 112), and in his "Fight against God" (IV, 274) he "treads on God's mercies" (IV, 274) and "Underfoot the Saviour trods" (III, 3). Many of Wesley's hymns employ imagery which reflects the "union" or "re-union" of God and man as it was performed by Christ:

> O Astonishing Grace,
> That the Reprobate Race
> Should be so reconcil'd!
> What a Wonder of Wonders that God is a Child!
>
> The Creator of all
> To repair our sad Fall,
> From his Heav'n stoops down,
> Lays hold of our Nature, and joins to his own.
>
> Our Immanuel came,
> The whole World to redeem,
> And Incarnated shew'd
> That Man may again be united to God!
>
> And shall we not hope,
> After God to wake up,
> His Nature to know?
> His Nature is sinless Perfection below.
>
> To this Heavenly Prize,
> By Faith let us rise
> To his Image ascend,
> Apprehended of God let us God apprehend.
> (IV, 119-120)

The ministry of reconciliation is captured most effectively in the image of stanza two; Christ becomes a carpenter who repairs the broken "furniture." Wesley makes it clear, however, that man must agree to be "repaired." He is a personality, and "Wesley teaches," Rattenbury remarks, "that man is a rebel, but that God respects his will; He cannot force it, or He will not. . . . A man who cannot resist would not be a man, but an automaton, hence God does not try to force him to assent; He loves him, reasons with him, and pleads with him. This is the doctrine which Charles Wesley had inherited and formulated in verse in contradiction to that of Calvin's irresistible God and passive, helpless clay-man."[8] The very concept that man can be a rebel is, then, Wesley's comment on the freedom of will. This type of imagery is different from that which pictures man as sick, for man cannot help being sick; rebellion represents an act of will, and Wesley clearly teaches in his images that man is an active rebel against God.

Images drawn from travel occur thirteen times. Most of these are metaphoric; the unregenerate man is "lost," "a Prodigal," "a Wanderer," a "Vagrant," or a "stranger from God." The best hymn which employs the "lost" man is the following:

> Thee, O my God and King,
>   My Father, Thee I sing!
> Hear well-pleas'd the joyous Sound,
>   Praise from Earth and Heav'n receive;
> Lost, I now in CHRIST am found,
>   Dead, by Faith in CHRIST I live.
>
> Father, behold thy Son,
>   In CHRIST I am thy own.
> Stranger long to Thee and Rest,
>   See the Prodigal is come:
> Open wide thine Arms and Breast,
>   Take the weary Wand'rer home.
>
> Thine Eye observ'd from far,
>   Thy pity look'd me near:
> Me thy Bowels yearn'd to see,
>   Me thy Mercy ran to find,
> Empty, poor, and void of Thee,
>   Hungry, sick, and faint, and blind.
>
> Thou on my Neck didst fall,
>   Thy Kiss forgave me all:
> Still the gracious Words I hear,
>   Words that made the Saviour mine,
> Haste, for Him the Robe prepare,
>   His be Righteousness Divine!
>   (I, 96)

---

[8] Evangelical Doctrines, p. 126.

Frequently Wesley allows the image to shift to the sea--the sinner is still lost, but in a storm rather than in a strange land:

JESU, Lover of my Soul,
  Let me to Thy Bosom fly,
While the nearer Waters roll,
  While the Tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
  Till the Storm of Life is past;
Safe into the Haven guide;
  O receive my Soul at last.
(I, 259)

In this case the image refers to a redeemed man, but the "Storm of Life" is the same for all men; the difference Wesley stresses is that there is a "Haven" for the Christian but none for the unredeemed. This same imagery occurs in the following:

Our Brother the Haven hath gain'd,
  Outflying the Tempest and Wind,
His Rest He hath sooner obtain'd,
  And left his Companions behind;
Still toss'd on a Sea of Distress,
  Hard toiling to make the Blest Shore,
Where all is Assurance and Peace,
  And Sorrow and Sin are no more.
(VI, 189)

But this "Sea of Distress" is terrible only to the unbeliever, for:

Let the winds blow, and billows roll,
Hope is the anchor of the soul:
But can I by so slight a tie,
An unseen hope, on God rely?
Stedfast and sure it cannot fail,
It enters deep within the veil,
It fastens on a land unknown,
And moors me to my Father's throne.
(XIII, 135)

The following hymn contains practically every image which Wesley utilized to reveal the nature of fallen man. In the left hand margin I have placed the characteristics of fallen man in capital letters and have underlined in the hymn the images to which they refer:

Glory to God, and Praise, and Love
Be ever, ever given:
By Saints below, and Saints above,
The Church in Earth and Heaven.

On this Glad Day the glorious Sun
Of Righteousness arose,
BLIND On my benighted Soul he shone,
WEARY And fill'd it with Repose.

Sudden expir'd the legal Strife,
SAD 'Twas then I ceas'd to grieve,
DEAD My Second, Real, living Life
I then began to live.

Then with my Heart I first believ'd,
Believ'd, with Faith Divine,
Power with the Holy Ghost receiv'd
To call the Saviour Mine.

SINFUL I felt my Lord's Atoning Blood
Close to my Soul applied
Me, Me, he lov'd--the Son of God
For me, for me He died!

I found, and own'd his Promise true,
Ascertain of my Part,
UNPARDONED My Pardon passed in Heaven I knew
When written on my Heart.

O for a Thousand Tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's Praise!
The Glories of my God and King,
The Triumphs of His Grace.

My gracious Master, and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread thro' all the Earth abroad
The Honours of Thy Name.

AFRAID JESUS the Name that charms our Fears,
SAD That bids our Sorrows cease;
'Tis Musick in the Sinner's Ears,
DEAD, SICK, DISTURBED 'Tis Life, and Health, and Peace!

He breaks the Power of cancell'd Sin,
IMPRISONED He sets the Prisoner free:
His Blood can make the Foulest clean;
FILTHY His Blood avail'd for me.

He speaks; and listening to His Voice,
DEAD New Life the *Dead* receive,
SAD The *Mournful*, broken Hearts rejoice
The humble Poor believe.

DEAF, DUMB Hear Him ye *Deaf*, His praise ye *Dumb*
Your loosen'd Tongues employ,
BLIND Ye *Blind*, behold your Saviour come,
LAME And leap, ye *Lame*, for Joy.

Look unto Him, ye Nations, own
FALLEN Your God, ye *fallen* Race,
Look, and be sav'd, thro' Faith alone;
Be justified by Grace!

See all your Sins on JESUS laid;
The Lamb of God was slain,
His Soul was once an Offering made
For every Soul of Man.

HARLOTS, *Harlots*, and *Publicans*, and *Thieves*
PUBLICANS, In holy Triumph join!
THIEVES Sav'd is the Sinner that believes
CRIMINALS From *Crimes* as great as Mine.

MURDERERS *Murtherers*, and all ye hellish Crew,
LUSTFUL Ye Sons of *Lust* and *Pride*,
PROUD Believe the Saviour died for you;
For me the Saviour died.

DEAD Awake from *guilty Nature's Sleep*,
BLIND And CHRIST shall *give you Light*,
SINFUL Cast all your *Sins* into the Deep,
And wash the Ethiop white.

With me, your Chief, you then shall know,
SINFUL Shall feel your *Sins* forgiven;
Anticipate your Heaven below,
And own that Love is Heaven.
(I, 299-301)

Clearly, Wesley's view of the fallen nature of man was dark and pessimistic; it is just as obvious that his view of the nature of the redeemed man is filled with hope.

Wesley's imagery relating to the new nature of man in Christ is simply the positive of those negative qualities or characteristics of the nature of fallen man. If the unconverted man is "bound in sin," the converted man is "freed from sin"; if the fallen nature is "blind and deaf and dumb," then the new nature can "see and hear and sing."

Wesley's images in this area usually take one of two forms. Fifty-six times out of the total of 105 references to the new nature Wesley points to the new relationship which is formed when a man experiences conversion. He is no longer a "Rebel" but a "soldier" (IX, 43) in God's army. He is an "adopted Son" (XI, 458), "The Purchase of God" (VIII, 148), a "tender Vine" connected to God (V, 178), "an heir of Heaven" (III, 148), for since "Jesus is his Brother" (IV, 108), he is therefore "part of the Body" (I, 361). He is no longer a victim but a "Conqueror of the World" (XIII, 174) through this new nature, and all will be "Partners in celestial palaces" (XIII, 150) now that Christ "Dwells within the Heart" (II, 177). He is the "lamb of God" (XIII, 121), the "Bride of Christ" (IX, 158), and the "Freeman of the Lord" (V, 142). Most of these are images of union, and as we see in the following lines, this union brings complete and utter joy:

> My God I am thine,
> What a Comfort divine,
> What a Blessing to know that JESUS is mine!
>
> In the Heavenly Lamb
> Thrice Happy I am;
> My Heart it doth dance to the Sound of thy Name.
>
> True Pleasures abound
> In the rapturous Sound;
> And whoever hath found it hath Paradise found.
>
> My JESUS to know,
> And feel his Blood flow,
> 'Tis Life Everlasting, 'Tis Heaven below.

Yet onward I haste
To the Heavenly Feast;
That, that is the Fulness: but this is the Taste.

And this I shall prove,
'Till with Joy I remove
To the Heaven of Heavens of JESUS' Love.
(V, 24)

This joy of union is extremely personal, and we find the hymns of Wesley studded with a sense of amazement at the individual inclusion in the new nature:

And can it be, that I should gain
An Int'rest in the Saviour's Blood!
Dy'd He for Me?--who caus'd his Pain!
For Me?--who Him to Death pursu'd.
Amazing Love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for Me!
(I, 105)

I felt my Lord's Atoning Blood
Close to _my_ Soul applied;
_Me_, _me_ he lov'd--the Son of God
For _me_, for _me_ He died!
(I, 299)

But there is another characteristic to the new nature of man, and Wesley's images reflect this facet forty-six times. The new nature is not simply to receive; it is to be "crucified" (II, 350) in some sense. There is a functional aspect to the new relationship which man gains when he is converted, and this aspect of religion is captured in terms such as "faithful Servants" (II, 187) and "redeem'd Servants" (IX, 203). The military image in "Soldiers of Christ Arise" (V, 40-44) simply puts this aspect in another image--the Christian is to fight (spiritual weapons, of course!) against powers and principalities. He becomes a "Conqueror" (V, 363) by active service in this world. He is a "Minister" (IV, 133), a "Priest" (X, 110), and even a "King" (XI, 211);

his function is clearly set forth as an active agent in God's purpose. In the following hymn Wesley used the image of a vessel to illustrate the "functionality" of the new nature:

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
  One in Three, and Three in One,
As by the celestial Host
  Let thy Will on Earth be done;
Praise by All to Thee be given,
Glorious Lord of Earth and Heaven!

Vilest of the fallen Race,
  Lo! I answer to thy Call,
Meanest Vessel of thy Grace,
  (Grace divinely free for All)
Lo, I come to do thy Will,
All thy Counsel to fulfil.

If so poor a Worm as I
  May to thy great Glory live,
All my Actions sanctify,
  All my Words and Thoughts receive:
Claim me, for thy Service, claim
All I have, and all I am.

Take my Soul and Body's Powers,
  Take my Mem'ry, Mind, and Will,
All my Goods, and all my Hours,
  All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my Heart--but make it new.

Now, O God, thine Own I am,
  Now I give Thee back thy own,
Freedom, Friends, and Health, and Fame,
  Consecrate to Thee alone;
Thine I live, thrice happy I,
Happier still for Thine I die.
(III, 333)

Wesley set forth this doctrine of submission in almost every possible form. The following lines appeared in Family Hymns (1767); it is not a good hymn,[9] but it does illustrate the conviction of Wesley that the Christian must serve in sorrow as well as in joy:

Lovely-fair, but breathless clay,
  Whither is thy tenant gone?
Would the soul no longer stay
  Prisoner in a world unknown?
Surfeited with life and pain,
Is she fled to heaven again?

Wherefore did she visit earth,
  Earth so suddenly to leave,
Gaul'd and burthen'd from the birth,
  Only born to cry and grieve?
What was all her life below?
One sad month of fruitless woe.

Count we now our mournful gains,
  We who call'd the child our own:
Lo, she pays her mother's pains
  With her last expiring groan:
Mocking all his fond desires,
Lo, her Father's Hope expires!

Thus her parents grief she chears,
  Transient as a short-liv'd flower,
Scarcely seen she disappears,
  Blooms, and withers in an hour,
Thus our former loss supplies,
Thus our promis'd Comfort dies!

But shall sinful man complain
  Stript by Divine decree?
Dares our impious grief arraign
  Heaven's tremendous Majesty?
Rather let us meekly own
All is right which God hath done.

God hath answer'd all our prayers,
  Mended after his own will,
Number'd with salvations heirs
  Her whose happy change we feel,
Her whose bliss rebukes our sighs,
Bids us follow to the skies.

---

[9] On 25 July 1755, Charles Wesley's second child died, christened Martha Maria only a few weeks earlier. The mother's pregnancy, the birth, the days and nights of sickness, and the death were the occasions for "hymns" some to be published later by the parents.

God, t'enhance her joys above,
  Gave her a few painful days,
Object of his richest love,
  Vessel of his choicest grace,
Bade her suffer with his Son,
Die to claim an earlier throne.
. . . .
(VII, 82-84)

And on and on it goes. In this study I have attempted to analyze the imagery of Wesley, not just the good imagery. This "hymn" is not one of Wesley's more valuable compositions; the imagery is quite ineffective. The concept of a body as "breathless clay" or the figure of the soul as a "tenant" which has fled certainly offers nothing new as far as imagery is concerned. In stanza three the image is related to economics, for the child "pays her mother's pains," and this may have some originality if not a great deal of force. Stanza four is perhaps the weakest. The familiar image of a dying child "Transient as a short-liv'd flower" was ancient even in Wesley's own day, and the sentimentalized lines reflect Wesley's grief as a parent, not his skill as a poet. The purpose of the hymn is actually defeated, for though Wesley attempts to indicate the Christian duty of fortitude in the face of loss, the entire composition is filled with grief rather than with calm acceptance of God's will. Stanzas five and six formulate the doctrine of patience in the midst of disaster, but the over-emotional imagery of the first four stanzas neutralizes the teaching to a great extent.

Several times we find in Wesley's hymns a dichotomy which reflects the paradox in the new nature: man is in this physical world, but he is not part of it. The following hymn is built around the image of a pilgrimage:

Come, let us anew
Our Journey pursue,
Roll round with the year.
And never stand still, 'till the Master appear;
His adorable will
Let us gladly fulfil,
And our talents improve
By the patience of hope, and the labour of love.

Our life is a Dream,
Our time as a stream
Glides swiftly away.
And the fugitive moment refuses to stay,
The Arrow is flown,
The moment is gone,
The millennial year
Rushes on to our view, and Eternity's here!

O that each in the day
Of His coming might say
'I have fought my way thro',
'I have finished the work thou didst give me to do!
O that each from his Lord
May receive the glad word,
'Well and faithfully done,
'Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne!
(VI, 14)

Many hymns reflect this idea, that man is a pilgrim, but Wesley recognizes that no matter what metaphysical concepts rule in the heart man is still an inhabitant of a physical earth, a member of society. In the following hymn he draws the line between the new nature and fallen nature as far as worldly affairs are concerned; in the first publication of this work in Hymns and Sacred Poems (1749) it was entitled "Innocent Diversions."[10] Note that the first two lines are identical with the poem quoted above the single change of "Journey" to "Pleasure":

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[10] This hymn refers to "The Watchnight Service" which the Wesleys offered as a counter attraction to the ale-house roistering of the Kingswood miners. These services were usually held once a month while the moon was full, so as to avoid inconvenience, danger, and scandal for the late travellers.

Come let us anew
Our Pleasures pursue:
For *Christian* delight
The day is too short; let us borrow the Night.
In sanctify'd Joy
Each Moment employ,
To JESUS's Praise,
And spend, and be spent in the Triumph of Praise.

The Slaves of Excess,
Their Senses to please
Whole Nights can bestow,
And on in a Circle of Riot they go:
Poor Prodigals, They
The Night into Day
By Revellings turn,
And all the Restraints of Sobriety scorn.

The Drunkards proclaim
At Midnight their Shame,
Their Sacrifice bring,
And Loud to the Praise of *their* Master they sing:
The Hellish Desires
Which *Satan* inspires,
In Sonnets they breathe,
And shouting descend to the Mansions of Death.

The Civiller Croud,
In Theatres proud,
Acknowledge his Power,
And *Satan* in Nightly Assemblies adore:
To the Masque and the Ball
They fly at his Call;
Or in Pleasures excel,
And chaunt in a Grove to the Harpers of Hell.

And shall we not sing
Our Master and King
While Men are at rest,
With JESUS admitted at Midnight to feast?
Here only we may
With Innocence stay,
The enjoyment improve,
And abide at the Banquet of JESUS's Love.

In Him is bestow'd
The Spiritual Food,
The Manna Divine,
And JESUS's love is far better than Wine:
With Joy we receive
The Blessings, and give
By Day and by Night,
All Thanks to the Source of our endless Delight.

Our Concert of Praise
To JESUS we raise,
And all the Night long
Continue the New Evangelical Song:
We dance to the Fame
Of JESUS's Name,
The Joy it imparts
In Heaven begun in our Musical Hearts.

Thus, thus we bestow
Our Moments below,
And singing remove,
With all the Redeem'd to the Sion above:
There, there shall we stand
With our Harps in our hand,
Interrupted no more,
And eternally sing, and rejoice, and adore.
(V, 282-284)

The imagery is almost buried beneath direct didactic statement, but it is clear that Charles Wesley saw the need for some adjustment on the part of the Christian in order to exist in the world.

The imagery in Wesley's hymns which reflects the nature of the "old" man and the "new" man is basically a contrast. In the section of this chapter which deals with the pilgrim experience I shall offer other examples of Wesley's imagistic treatment of the believer's condition.

The third major referent of Wesley's imagery is the conversion experience. Charles Wesley Flint over-simplifies this facet of the Methodist Movement when he insists that "The Methodist message . . . had three simple features: (1) Everyone may be a child of God; (2) If you are a child of God, you may know it; (3) If you are a child of God you will show it."[11] In the last section I will deal with this latter premise, but first it is necessary to examine the doctrine of conversion as the imagery of Charles Wesley's hymns depicts it.

Naturally the condition of the "new" man which I have discussed above overlaps the subject of conversion. Images of washing, for example, occur seventeen times in relation to the conversion experience: "wash'd in Jesus's blood" (V, 135), "the blood quenched the Wrath" (I, 105), "Blood applied" (I, 299) will "wash the Ethiop white" (I, 299). Frequently the term "purge" is connected to this image of cleansing: "He purg'd our stains" (IV, 140), "Purge and wash out all my guilt" (IX, 275), and "purge my Heart" (I, 223).

Legal or prison imagery occurs twenty-six times. "Pardon" is employed ten times, and there are many expressions such as "Sudden expired the Legal Strife" (I, 299), "He sets the prisoner free" (I, 234), and "burst our bonds and set us free" (III, 228).

"Redeem'd" is found twelve times and "ransom'd" eleven times. Six images refer to the process of sealing, such as "He sealed my Pardon" (V, 312), or "My soul is sealed" (VIII, 314), and five times writing is used as an image: "Write forgiveness on my Heart" (III, 228) and "My name is written on His Hands" (II, 323). Actually, all those images which refer to the nature of the unredeemed man and those which refer to the redeemed individual reflect to some degree the nature of the conversion experience. All the metaphors of union, of relationship to God are actually descriptions of the conversion experience itself. When Wesley speaks of Christ as a Shepherd and the Christian as a lamb, he is stating his conviction that conversion places the individual in this position with respect to God. Since these images have been documented above there is no necessity for covering the ground again; however, there are four aspects of the conversion experience which are significant from the standpoint of imagery. According to Flint, one of the three essential facets of conversion was the doctrine that "Everyone may be a child of God." There was not a universal acceptance of this however, for possibly the strongest influence on Charles Wesley came from the controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism which rent the Methodist Movement in two parts. Charles Wesley was not only more snobbish but also more openly satirical than his brother, and this note appears repeatedly in his hymns. His most biting satire came in 1741, when he crudely stated the Calvinist case in "The Horrible Decree":

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[11] Charles Wesley and His Colleagues (Washington, D. C., 1957), p. 97.

The righteous God Consign'd
  Them over to their doom,
And sent the Saviour of mankind
  To damn them from the womb:

To damn for falling short
  Of what they could not do,
For not believing the report
  Of that which was not true.

The God of love pass'd by
  The most of those that fell,
Ordain'd poor reprobates to die,
  And forced them into hell.
He did not do the deed,
  (Some have more mildly raved,)

He did not damn them--but decreed
They never should be saved.

Arminianism was to Charles Wesley--indeed to the whole Methodist Movement--something more than the opposite side of Calvinism. It was the dynamic force that gave it life. It was only because they believed that the love of God applied to all that their people were prepared to suffer and work, and the Wesleys saw truly that the success of the Revival depended on this doctrine. The imagery of Charles Wesley's hymns derived to a great extent from this doctrine, for "the 'Romantic' elements in Charles Wesley," according to T. B. Shepherd, "become obvious whenever Arminian views were being expressed. It was when he was feeling deeply about this subject that his words became wild and his verse began to sing. It introduced the feeling of spaciousness into his verse."[12] Shepherd illustrates this idea by stating that:

> The idea of size, of great space, of extent, of vast quantity rushes into his verse whenever he is moved, and is his most outstanding characteristic. Water and fire are the metaphors he most frequently uses to express this idea of universal salvation or grace. It is a stream, a river, a sea, an ocean; it is fathomless, abundant, wide, extending, unbounded, and never-ceasing; or it is a fire, a spark, a blaze, plentiful, extensive, stretching to the utmost, rising high and higher, giving light to the feast with joy ineffable, bliss-transporting, triumphs, and dazzling raptures. Numbers like a thousand and ten thousand often appear and the words 'all', 'every', 'entire,' 'plenty' occur repeatedly.[13]

God's love, according to Wesley, is universal, for all men. Calvin wrote a great deal about the tenderness of God to his chosen ones, but

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[12] *Methodism and the Literature of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1947), p. 114.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Wesley claims that the tender love of God is for *every* man:

A world He suffer'd to redeem;
For all he hath th' atonement made;
For those that will not come to Him
The ransom of His life was paid.
(VI, 213)

Man's stubborn will is reflected by Wesley's frequent use of rebellion as a source of imagery, and some of the best lines in his canon are pleas for the "rebels" to be reconciled to their King:

What could your Redeemer do,
More than He hath done for You?
To procure your peace with God,
Could He more than shed His blood?
After all His waste of love,
All his drawings from above,
Why will you your Lord deny?
Why will you resolve to die?
(VII, 233)

Wesley's most powerful statement of this doctrine of universalism occurs in *God's Everlasting Love*, a hymn book primarily written to refute the doctrine of election:

Father, whose *everlasting love*
Thy only Son for sinners gave,
Whose grace to all did *freely* move,
And sent Him down a *world* to save;

Help us Thy mercy to extol,
Immense, unfathom'd, unconfined;
To praise the Lamb who *died for all*,
The *general Saviour of mankind*.

Thy *undistinguishing reward*
Was cast on *Adam*'s fallen race;
For all Thou hast in Christ prepared
Sufficient, *sovereign*, *saving* grace.
(III, 3-5)

The words italicized indicate plainly the "teaching" function found so often in Wesley's hymns (though these lavish italics were dropped from later publications). On the whole it would seem that Wesley's use of the hymn as a weapon wielded in the theological warfare against the extreme Calvinism of his day added to the scope of visual imagery, but it often degenerated into acrimonious squabbling[14] which marred the quality of some of his compositions.

"Can the individual know he is saved?" This question Wesley answered early in his ministry, and the imagery of his hymns reflects the certainty of his conviction. Two very important verbs in his work are "feel" and "prove." Mere intellectual apprehension and assent might serve the Age of Reason, but it was by no means sufficient for Wesley; men must feel the truth, they must prove conversion by practical experience. In the following poem Wesley floods the lines with images which convey the impression of assurance:

> How can a Sinner know
>   His Sins on Earth forgiven?
> How can my Saviour, shew
>   My name inscrib'd in Heaven?
> What we ourselves have felt, and seen,
>   With Confidence we tell,
> And publish to the Sons of Men
>   The Signs Infallible.
>
> We who in CHRIST believe
>   That He for us hath died,
> His unknown Peace receive,
>   And feel his Blood applied:

---

[14] The most famous hymn of all time was the occasion of a frightful Donnybrook. Toplady's "Rock of Ages" bore the title of "A Living and Dying Prayer for the Holiest Believer in the World" and inspired the controversy between Toplady and John Wesley over the dogma of election. Comparing a man's "debt of sin" to the National Debt, Toplady showed that, at the rate of one sin per second, every man at twenty years is guilty of the total of 630,720,000 sins; at fifty of 1,575,800,000; and at eighty of 2,522,880,000. Then he asks "When shall we be able to pay off this debt:" and answers "never."

Exults for Joy our rising Soul,
  Disburthen'd of her Load,
And swells, unutterably full
  Of Glory and of God.

His Love, surpassing far
  The Love of all beneath
We find within, and dare
  The pointless Darts of Death:
Stronger than Death or Sin, or Hell
  The mystic Power we prove,
And Conquerors of the World we dwell
  In Heaven, who dwell in Love.

The _Pledge_ of Future Bliss
  He now to us imparts,
His gracious Spirit is
  The _Earnest_ in our Hearts:
We antedate the Joys above,
  We taste th' Eternal Powers,
And _know_ that all those Heights of Love
  And those Heavens are Ours.

'Till He our Life reveal,
  We rest in CHRIST secure:
His Spirit is _The Seal_,
  Which made our Pardon sure:
Our Sins his Blood hath blotted out,
  And sign'd our Soul's Release:
And can we of his Favour doubt,
  Whose Blood declares us His?

We by his Spirit prove,
  And know the Things of God,
The Things which of his Love
  He hath on us bestow'd:
Our God to Us his Spirit gave,
  And dwells in Us, we _know_,
The Witness in ourselves we have,
  And all his Fruits we shew.

The meek and lowly Heart
  Which in our Saviour was,
He doth to us impart,
  And signs us with his Cross;
Our Nature's Course is turn'd, our Mind
  Transform'd in all its powers,
And both the Witnesses are join'd,
  The Spirit of God with Ours.

What'er our Pardning Lord
  Commands, we gladly do,
And guided by his Word,
  We all his steps pursue:
His Glory is our sole Design,
  We live our God to please,
And rise with Filial Fear Divine
  To perfect Holiness.
(V, 363)

The opening quatrain of this hymn sets out the problem. The second four lines declare that the answer is to be found in the Christian awareness of God which comes through faith in Christ. It is what is "felt" and "seen." The rest of the hymn is an expository development of this concept, each stanza serving as a "point" or explanation of the work of the Holy Spirit according to the scriptures. Wesley employs imagery throughout the hymn to lead the singer through a series of steps:

(stanza 1) The key passage here is found in line 4. It is an echo of several passages in the New Testament referring to a "book." "And whosoever's name was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). It is a legal and technical matter; if one's name is written in the book, his salvation is assured.

(stanza 2) The image here is, of course, the familiar application of blood. The image goes back to the living reality for the patriarchs, and the reference to the Passover is clear. Only by the application of blood to the lintel of their houses could the Angel of Death be deterred. The image of this reality is carried over to the New Testament and is a familiar one in the hymn writers of all periods.

(stanza 3) The danger of losing the soul is minimized here by the phrase "The pointless Darts of Death," and the power of the image lies in the fact that the darts are, for the Christian, "pointless."

(stanza 4) An image drawn from economics or law dominates this stanza. The saved man has the "Earnest" (pledge of good faith we might call it), and this powerful "guest" is able to give us a "guarantee" of heaven.

(stanza 5) Two images are combined here: the Seal of royalty and the blotting out (cleansing).

(stanza 6) The metaphor here portrays the Holy Spirit as a "Witness"; he speaks or tells of the individual's salvation.

(stanza 7) Wesley's imagery is less clear in this stanza, but there is something of a mystic (or magical) transformation. There is a suggestion that base metal has been changed to gold, but there is a more vivid image of marriage in the last two lines; man is somehow "joined" to God.

(stanza 8) The figure of the Guide is the final image, and there is at least a suggestion of the Shepherd of Psalm 23.

Wesley has given us a hymn of eight stanzas, and in each of these he has suggested a different "proof" of security; these evidences should cause the individual to "feel" or "know" that he is saved. The statement "I know I am saved because I feel I am saved" must have infuriated the Calvinists of Wesley's day, but when all the evidence is weighed in the balances, this is the basis of Wesley's assurance.

It should be pointed out that the hope which proved to be the keynote of Charles Wesley's work was not without certain dangers. Already subject to extremes of elation and depression unknown to the more matter-of-fact John, Charles at times allowed himself to fall into dark moods of melancholy which are often reflected in his hymns. The gloomy pessimism of the following poem is an example of Wesley's doubt:

> And is there Hope for me
> In Life's distracting Maze,
> And shall I live on Earth to see
> A few unruffled Days:
> A Man of Sorrows I
> A Sufferer from the Womb,
> 'Twas all my Hope in Peace to die,
> And rest within my Tomb.
>
> How then can I conceive
> A Good for me design'd
> The greater God Himself could give
> The Parent of Mankind?
> A good by Sovereign Love
> To sinless Adam given
> His Joyous Paradise t'improve,
> And turn his Earth to Heaven.
>
> God of unbounded Grace
> If yet Thou wilt bestow
> On me the Vilest of the Race
> Thy choicest Gift below;
> My drooping Heart prepare
> The Blessing to receive
> And bid the Child of sad Despair
> With confidence Believe.
>
> My new & strange Distress
> To Thee I simply own,
> Inur'd to Pain I start from Peace
> And dread a Good unknown:
> My Heart Thou seest it ache
> Its Dearest Wish t'obtain
> And knowest my Fear of measuring back
> My steps to Earth again.
>
> Assure my trembling Soul,
> Of the decisive Will
> My endless Doubts & Fears controul,

And bid my Heart be still:
Regard thy Servant's Call
And shed thy Love abroad
The Sign Infallible that all
My Works are wrought in God.
(X, 122-123)

This is not the imagery, the tone, which usually fills the hymns of Wesley with joy and assurance, but it is an element which reflects his struggle with religious doubt.

Frequently Wesley refers to his life between 1729 and 1738 as "Legal Night," by which he means a time of darkness when he struggled to achieve favour with God by keeping the commandments in his own strength--and hopelessly failed. The "darkness" of this period is sharply contrasted with the "dawn" which marked its end:

That sudden flash of heavenly light
Which once broke in upon my night,
Has made my darkness visible,
And left me to a deeper hell.
(VII, 34)

To the night itself he frequently refers:

For ten long legal years I lay
A hopeless but reluctant prey
To pride and lust and earth and hell.
(III, 345)

On May 21, 1739, the first anniversary of his conversion he wrote:

On this glad day the glorious Sun
Of Righteousness arose:
On my benighted soul He shone,
And fill'd it with repose.

Sudden expired the legal strife.
. . . .
(I, 299)

This light-darkness imagery is the key to Wesley's doctrine of justification by faith; one year later he wrote:

Baffled by twice ten thousand foils,
I ceased to struggle in the toils,
  And yielded to a just despair.

'Twas then my Soul beheld from far
The glimmering of an orient Star,
  That pierced and cheer'd my Nature's Night.
Sweetly it dawned, and promised Day;
Sorrow and Sin it chased away,
  And opened into glorious Light.
(VI, 189)

The inability of the law to bring relief to the spirit of man is frequently pictured through prison imagery. The night was dark, but legal. He uses the figure of imprisonment under the law of sin and death perhaps as often as that of night:

I neither hug nor bite my Chains.
(VII, 356)

The thought of chains and imprisonment in that legal night he once expressed in a splendid couplet:

My struggling soul in sin remains,
Indignant, as a king in chains.
(III, 230)

But then:

Faith freed me from the iron yoke,
  The strength of sin subdued,
From off my soul the fetters broke,
  And now I serve my God.
(IV, 45)

And so says the more familiar:

He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,
And sets the prisoner free.
(VII, 36)

In that "legal night" he felt, as these and many other images reveal, the indignity of the clanging chains, the tyranny he could rebel against but could not escape. The two figures are joined together to give in one of the most vivid stanzas in hymnody the picture of his deliverance on a dark night from chains and prison:

Long my imprison'd spirit lay,
  Fast bound in sin and Nature's Night!
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;
  I woke; the dungeon flamed with Light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.
(I, 210)

Rattenbury in Evangelical Doctrines insists that the heart of Wesley's imagery is in this stanza, that justification by faith is the key note of all his hymns. Stressing the fact that men of Wesley's day were more conscious of the wrath of God than the love of God, he indicates that it was only after an attempt to satisfy God legally (keeping the law) that they found God through faith and were justified:

> Conscientious men like the Wesleys, who had striven with all their might after an ideal which they found humanly unattainable, knew a fear that had torment. No wonder they strove for liberation. The experience that they reached through faith, of Justification, was that they were delivered from God's wrath--absolved from the guilt of sin. They were forgiven, not because they were good, but because Christ, God's Son, was good even unto the death of the Cross. They experienced deliverance and entered into a new order of life. They did not need to wait until the Day of Judgement for salvation; they experienced a present salvation. Life was cut in two by this experience. Before it, it was night, 'legal night'; after it, day . . . Whether this clean dichotomy, this bisection of life was rightly or wrongly conceived, it was certainly what early Methodism taught and it underlies the greatest hymns of Charles Wesley. (p. 252)

A few quotations from his hymns will show clearly that his imagery is inextricably tied to this concept of justification by faith:

A miracle of grace and sin,
Pardon'd, yet still, alas, unclean!
Thy righteousness is counted mine:
When will it in my nature shine?
(V, 134)

That is exactly what Luther meant by justification, not made righteous, but deemed righteous. Earlier, Wesley had written

I feel my pardon seal'd in blood;
  Saviour, Thy love I wait to feel.

Freed from the power of cancell'd sin;
  When shall my soul triumphant prove?
Why breaks not out the fire within
  In Flames of joy and praise and love?

Yet, O! ten thousand lusts remain,
  And vex my soul absolved from sin;
Still rebel nature strives to reign,
  Still am I all unclean, unclean!
(VII, 41)

In these lines Wesley uses the imagery of law again to show that though the individual may be redeemed by faith, he still must face the problem of sin. His spiritual life would involve struggle, and sometimes he seems to have wondered whether the clouded day was much superior to the dark night. On June 3, 1749, he asks in his Journal, "Where is the difference between what I am now, and what I was before believing?" But he quickly answers himself "This darkness is not like the former darkness because I am satisfied that there is no guilt in it."

It must have been a daunting experience for an English clergyman, born, baptized, and initiated through ordination into the innermost mysteries of the Anglican Church, to have the inadequacy of both his faith and practice brought before him, but this evidently happened. We read in his Journal that on May 21, 1738, as he lay very ill a visitor came into his room: "At eleven [says the Journal] I waked in extreme pain, which I thought would quickly separate soul and body. Soon after Peter Bohler came to my bedside . . . He asked me: Do you hope to be saved? Yes. For what reason do you hope it?

Because I have used my best endeavours to serve God. He shook his head and said no more. I thought him very uncharitable, saying in my heart: What are not my endeavours a sufficient ground of hope? Would he rob me of my endeavours? I have nothing else to trust in."

Here lay the crux of the whole matter. It was hard for Charles to accept the doctrine of justification by faith, no doubt, for it was foreign to everything he believed. In placing the believer of a moment on a par with the worker of a lifetime, the doctrine provided a loophole for that most dubious of all theories--instantaneous conversion. This conclusion which Charles was prepared to combat tooth and nail had already been accepted by John, and on occasion was being maintained by him in what seemed to his brother a shocking manner. In less than a month Charles himself was not only experiencing but preaching this "scandalous" doctrine, and for the rest of his life he put into his hymns justification by faith in every possible form. One very fine hymn which combines Wesley's assurance of his justification by faith with the unavoidable truth that even the redeemed man is still subject to the law of flesh is the following:

Arise, my Soul, arise,
  Shake off thy guilty Fears,
The Bleeding Sacrifice
  In my Behalf appears;
Before the Throne my Surety stands;
My Name is written on His Hands.

He ever lives above
  For me to interceed,
His All-redeeming Love,
  His pretious Blood to plead;
His Blood aton'd for All our Race,
And sprinkles now the Throne of Grace.

Five bleeding Wounds He bears,
  Receiv'd on Calvary;
They pour effectual Prayers,
  They strongly speak for me;
Forgive him, O forgive, they cry,
Nor let that Ransom'd Sinner die!

The Father hears Him pray,
  His dear Anointed One,
He cannot turn away
  The Presence of His Son:
His Spirit answers to the Blood,
And tells me, I am born of God.

My God is reconcil'd,
  His Pard'ning Voice I hear,
He owns me for His Child,
  I can no longer fear;
With Confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba Father, cry!
(II, 323-324)

The apostrophe in the first two lines is in direct contrast to the last two lines; the speaker has guilty fears in the beginning, but the experience described in the body of the hymn works in such a way that he can draw close to God in confidence in the last two lines. The economic image "Surety" in stanza one is joined to the image of a "Bleeding Sacrifice" which was in itself an Old Testament "image" of the death of Christ, and this blood begins to speak for itself in the second stanza, then continues in the third. Once again Wesley makes it clear by the figure drawn from crime--the victim of a kidnapping is ransom'd--that men are not kept safe through their own efforts. The Holy Spirit becomes a "Witness" in stanza four, and in the fifth stanza all the impact of these images is drawn together in the image of the new birth--God is now the Father indeed. This and many other hymns reveal the two-fold strain in Wesley's hymns; the doctrine of justification and the necessity of assurance.

The fourth and final referent of Wesley's images which merits some attention is the pilgrim experience--those facets of religious life which occur after conversion. "Contrary to a popular impression," H. A. Hodges insists, "the Wesleys were more concerned about this post-conversion stage than about conversion itself."[15] It is doubtful that the Wesleys would have put the matter in this form, but both men insisted in sermon and song that conversion with the witness of the Spirit and the assurance of sonship is not the end of man's spiritual pilgrimage. If it is the end of one stage, it is only the beginning of another.

The first major problem of the pilgrim experience is the issue of sin in the life of the believer. The imagery of Wesley frequently refers directly to this issue; Appendix C lists 62 references to purity and 61 references to sin. These two elements reveal the positive and negative side of Christian experience, but the matter of "Christian Perfection" was never solved by either John or Charles Wesley. Note that the imagery of the following hymn reveals clearly this basic dichotomy in the soul of the converted man:

O God, Thy faithfulness I plead!
My present help in time of need,
  My great Deliverer Thou!
Haste to my aid, Thine ear incline,
And rescue this poor soul of mine,
  I claim that promise now!

Where is the way? Say, show me where,
That I thy Mercy may declare,
  The Power that sets me free:
How can I my destruction shun?
How can I from my nature run?
  Answer, O God, for me!

---

[15] A Rapture of Praise (London, 1966), p. 19.

One only way the erring mind
Of Man, short-sighted man, can find
From inbred sin to fly;
Stronger than love, I fondly thought,
Death, only death can cut the knot,
Which love cannot untie.

But Thou, O Lord, art full of grace;
Thy love can find a thousand ways
To foolish man unknown;
My soul upon Thy love I cast,
I rest me, till the storm is past,
Upon thy love alone.

Thy faithful, wise, and mighty love
Shall every stumbling-block remove,
And make an open way;
Thy love shall burst the shades of death,
And bear me from the gulf beneath,
To everlasting day.
(VII, 313-314)

The most significant thing about the imagery of this hymn is that it is very little different from the imagery which describes the state of the unregenerate man. There is still a struggle as revealed by the image of a "Deliverer" in stanza one. Stanza two contains the image of a fugitive, a wanderer, a prisoner--all of which are frequently used to refer to the unregenerate man. Storm imagery, which so often refers to the lost man on life's sea, controls the third stanza, and in the final stanza there is once again light-darkness imagery, "the shades of death."

All of these images reflect the spiritual conflict of Charles Wesley; his hymns were sometimes written in despair, sometimes in triumph. In this spiritual struggle there were times when he lost his sense of God's pardoning love and some hymns reflect this loss so despairingly as to suggest an exaggerated sense of sin. A few of these verses border on the madness of despair, so much so that Wesley repeatedly (as in the hymn above) cried out for death so that he might be saved from further struggle. He wrote:

> Plague and curse I now inherit
>   Fears, and wars, and storms within,
> . . . .
> Guilt, and shame, and condemnation,
>   Doubt, distraction, and despair.
>
> Ye who now enjoy His favour,
>   Husband well the precious grace,
> Never lose, like me, your Saviour,
>   Never break from His embrace:
> Do not by your lightness grieve Him;
> Little children never leave Him,
>   Never lose your God like me.
> (III, 345)

In moments of despair he often used words like the following:

> Do not let me live to sin,
> Waft me to the silent grave.
> (VII, 33)

On the other hand he frequently complained at a lack of feeling of sorrow. One wonders what a modern psychiatrist would make of the following lines:

> Give me back my guilty load,
>   Give me back my earnest moans,
> Restless thirstings after God,
>   Deep, unutterable groans,
> Plaintive wailings, humble fears,
>   Griefs, which tongue could not declare,
> All the eloquence of tears,
>   All the prevalence of prayer.
> (V, 231)

There were periods of melancholy even during the days of his great Evangelical Crusade:

>   Ah, where am I now!
>   When was it, or how
> That I fell from my heaven of Grace!
>   I am brought into thrall,
>   I am stripped of my all,

I am banished from JESUS's face.
(III, 113)

It is this tendency to swing from one pole of emotion to another which prompts Rose Macaulay to remark that the Evangelical Movement seems always to have had a particular success with the mad:

> Certainly it is difficult, in the cases of both Cowper and of Christopher Smart, to distinguish between the religion that made them mad and the madness that made them religious. . . . But poor mad Smart's religion, unlike poor mad Cowper's, does at least sound cheerful. Before the spectacle of the tormented Cowper unsaved by the peaceful meadows of Olney, by his faithful female friends, by his hares, his dog, his rustic neighbours, or even by his beneficent wishes for the regeneration of mankind, a prey to the desperate assults of predestinating theology, a reprobate, a castaway, a stricken deer, and yet a poet, one's mind draws back in some dismay. . . . There is something painful about emotional religious revivals. They make against the literary humanities; they have always done so, in all countries, long before Christianity took hold of the world. The very thought of Methodism made men of culture shudder, and it says much for the strength and fervour of the Christianity of Dr. Johnson, that he admired John Wesley, who went clean against all his principles and tastes concerning ordered Church worship.[16]

This is not the place to examine the psychology of the religious mind, but it is evident that Charles Wesley's hymns reveal a sensitivity (which some would call instability) that his brother lacked. Basically Charles saw the pilgrimage of the soul as twofold, and two pilgrimages as similar but not identical. One is from earth to heaven, from mortality to immortality; the other is from sin to God, from selfishness or actual hate to love. The imagery, then, which describes both pilgrimages is drawn from the same general areas--war, travel, light-dark, etc. It is common for Wesley to speak of the weakness, the tendency to sin, the incompleteness of the converted soul. In the following hymn, for example, every stanza employs a different image, each reflecting the necessity of purity:

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[16] Some Religious Elements in Literature, pp. 152-153.

> Behold the Servant of the Lord!
>   I wait Thy guiding Hand to feel,
> To hear, and keep Thine every Word,
>   To prove, and do Thy perfect Will.
> Joyful from all my Works to cease,
> Glad to fulfill All righteousness.

Wesley begins with the familiar figure of man as the "Servant" of God the "Master," and the duty of the servant is quite apparent--he is to be righteous.

> Me, if Thy Grace vouchsafe to use,
>   Meanest of all Thy Creatures me,
> The Deed, the Time, the Manner chuse;
>   Let all my Fruit be found of Thee,
> Let all my Works in Thee be wrought,
> By Thee to full Perfection brought.

The figure of the servant is augmented by the image drawn from nature. The tree is to produce fruit, and to Wesley "full Perfection" was that fruit.

> My every Weak though Good, Design
>   O'errule, or change as seems Thee meet,
> Jesus, let all the Work be Thine;
>   Thy Work, O Lord, is All-compleat,
> And pleasing in Thy Father's Sight;
> Thou only hast done All Things right.
>
> Here then to Thee Thine own I leave.
>   Mould as Thou wilt the passive Clay;
> But let me all Thy Stamp receive,
>   But let me all Thy Words obey,
> Serve with a single Heart and Eye,
> And to thy Glory live, and die.
>   (V, 10-11)

The image in the third stanza seems to be connected to an architect who draws plans, but the final stanza is more clear. Righteousness is to be achieved in the life of man as the clay receives its final form; both are in the hands of the "Potter."

The following hymn is typical of the many compositions which Wesley wrote on the subject of the Christian's struggle against sin, his journey toward perfection. The imagery is not subtle; therefore I shall not comment on it except to say that it reveals Wesley's concern with the problem of righteousness:

O what an evil Heart have I,
  So cold, and hard, and blind,
With Sin so ready to comply,
  And cast my God behind!

So apt his Mercy to forget,
  So soon dissolv'd in Ease,
So false, so full of all Deceit,
  And desperate Wickedness!

Long have I murmur'd to be clean,
  From all iniquity,
But knew not that I lov'd my Sin,
  And would not be set free.

Oft when the pleasing Ill drew nigh,
  And God fore-shew'd my Fall,
I would not from Temptation fly,
  Or heed the Spirit's Call.

His warning Voice I would not mind,
  But turn'd mine Ear away,
And lingring stood, 'till Sin should find
  And seize its willing Prey.

Oft have I ask'd for Help, afraid
  Lest God my Voice should hear,
While with deceitful Lips I said
  Th' Abominable Prayer.

Oft, when He would not let me yield,
  But stopt me by his Grace,
I rag'd from Sin to be with-held,
  And burst from his Embrace.

When after each foul sinful Fall,
  I would have All given up,

He would not let me give up All,
  But forced me still to Hope.

Infinite, unexhausted Love!
  JESUS and Love are One:
If still to me Thy Bowels move,
  They are restrain'd to None.

If me, ev'n me Thou yet canst spare,
  Fury is not in Thee;
For All thy tender Mercies are,
  If Mercy is for me.

What shall I do my God to love,
  My loving God to praise!
The Length, and Breadth, and Height to prove,
  And Depth of Sovereign Grace!

Thy Sovereign Grace to All extends,
  Immense and unconfin'd,
From Age to Age it never ends,
  It reaches All Mankind.

Throughout the World its Breadth is known,
  Wide as Infinity,
So wide, it never pass'd by One,
  Or it had pass'd by me.

My Trespass is grown up to Heaven,
  But far above the Skies,
In CHRIST abundantly forgiven
  I see thy Mercies rise.

The Depth of All-redeeming Love
  What Angel-Tongue can tell!
O may I to the utmost prove
  The Gift unspeakable!

Deeper than Hell, it pluck'd me thence,
  Deeper than Inbred Sin,
JESUS his Love my Heart shall cleanse,
  When JESUS enters in.

Come quickly then, my Lord, and take
  Possession of Thine own,
My longing Heart vouchsafe to make
  Thine everlasting Throne.

Assert thy Claim, receive thy Right,
  Come quickly from above,
And sink me to Perfection's Height,

The Depth of Humble Love.
(IV, 445-447)

But if sin must be overcome within, there are numerous foes without. Sixty-four referents are to tribulation, for Wesley saw it as one function of hymnody to warn, hearten, comfort, and exhort believers with respect to trials. His hymns were both forged and sung in the furnace of persecution, and here lies their chief distinction from the hymns of Isaac Watts. Watts's gentle and didactic verses were well suited to the stable worship of established believers who had nothing to fear from the exercise of their religion. Written in the security of the pastorate of an independent Church in London, they know nothing of the agony of conviction of sin, of physical and moral peril, of fightings without and fears within, nor even of triumphant victory. Neither John nor Charles Wesley, however, expected to get to Heaven without a bloody nose or a few scars, and it is not too much to say that the battle-cries of this fight fill the pages of Wesley's hymnals. He sings very freely about both this conflict and the triumph. The battlefield is first the heart of the individual sinner, then the community of Christians involved together in the conflict, then the world at large. Even in the world at large, however, the battle is still within the heart of the individual:

> Come and maintain Thy righteous cause,
>   And let Thy glorious toil succeed;
> Dispread the victory of Thy cross,
>   Ride on, and prosper in Thy deed;
> Through earth triumphantly ride on,
>   And reign in every heart alone.
> (X, 129)

This "battle" may seem paradoxical in view of the fact that the early Methodists preached so emphatically a gospel of free (and present) salvation--the gift of God's grace and not the product of man's striving. The hymns combine the two notes, much contrasted and yet not really inconsistent. There is about them a note of joyous freedom from care and abandonment of worry; but there is also everywhere a serious note of concern, an almost nervous apprehension of possible danger, and even of defeat. This danger is usually placed within the framework of battle imagery:

See on the mountain-top
The standard of your God!
  In Jesu's Name I lift it up,
  All stained with hallowed blood.
(V, 314)

  That bloody banner see,
  And in your Captain's sight
Fight the good Fight of Faith with me,
  My fellow-soldiers, fight!
  In mighty Phalanx joined,
  To battle all proceed;
Armed with the unconquorable mind
  Which was in Christ your head.
(VIII, 12)

Usually trials would come from one of four sources: persecution, unwariness, spiritual hosts, or false doctrine. These were the foes of Charles Wesley, and the imagery of his hymns touches many times on each of them.

The persecutions which the early converts to Methodism had to endure were enough to dismay the stoutest hearts, but both Wesleys managed to avoid recriminations. One exception is found in the following hymn written after a mob at South Staffordshire had broken up a meeting; note the sarcasm of the second and third stanzas:

Dear dying Lamb, for whom alone
  We suffer pain, and shame, and loss,
Hear thine afflicted people groan,
  Crushed by the burden of thy cross;
And bear our fainting spirits up,
And bless the bitter, sacred cup.

Drunkards, and slaves of lewd excess,
  Bad, lawless men, thou know'st, we lived;
The world and we were then at peace,
  No devil his own servants grieved;
Evil we did, but suffered none;
The world will always love its own.

But now we would thy word obey,
  And strive to escape the wrath divine;
Exposed to all, an helpless prey,
  Bruised by our enemies and thine,
As sheep 'midst ravening wolves we lie,
And daily grieve, and daily die.

Smitten, we turn the other cheek,
  Our ease, and name, and goods forego,
Help or redress, no longer seek
  In any child of man below;
The powers thou didst for us ordain,
For us they bear the sword in vain.

Then Help us meekly to sustain
  The cross of man's oppressive power,
To slight the shame, endure the pain,
  And calmly wait the welcome hour
That brings the fiery chariot down,
And whirls us to our heavenly crown.
(II, 103-104)

Many images refer to the need for watchfulness, since unwariness led to disaster:

Into a world of ruffians sent,
  I walk on hostile ground,
Wild human beasts on slaughter bent,
  And ravening wolves, surround;
The lion seeks my soul to slay
  In some unguarded hour;
And waits to tear his sleeping prey,
  And watches to devour.
(V, 134)

This animal imagery is a framework for what is possibly Charles

Wesley's most vitriolic comment on the nature of unregenerate man.

Spiritual Hosts--powers of darkness--were the great foes of all Pilgrims, and it is likely that Charles Wesley had no doubt concerning the reality and imminence of the spiritual world. He had not his brother John's interest in spiritualism as we understand the word today; neither his Journal nor his letters contain any reference to Old Jeff, the famous ghost which haunted the new Epworth Rectory. But he unreservedly accepted the current interpretation of biblical references to the world of spirits. He refers in one of his hymns to his experience at Athlone where he was able to escape from a wild mob only through "angelic" deliverance:

  But God on his throne
  Protected his own
  The danger to ward
He planted around an angelical guard;
  Their wings were outspread
  And covered our head:
  Their arms were beneath
And bore us aloft from the weapons of death.
(III, 314)

But there were dark powers as well, and Wesley becomes almost Miltonic when he sings of them:

From thrones of glory driven
  By flaming vengeance hurled
They throng the air and darken heaven
  And rule the lower world.
(I, 230)

Battle imagery is the norm for this type of hymn:

Angels your march oppose
  Who still in strength excel,
Your secret, sworn, eternal foes,
  Countless, invisible,
With rage that never ends
  Their hellish arts they try;
Legions of dire malicious fiends,

And spirits enthroned on high.
(VIII, 172)

One final danger or trial might be added to this list; false doctrine could lay the Christian low as quickly as the Devil himself. From time to time Wesley managed to give "sheep stealers" a good solid jab:

The Unitarian fiend expel
And chase his doctrine back to Hell[17]

And he classes that doctrine with that of

That Arab Chief as Satan bold
Who quite destroyed thy Asian fold.
(XII, 132)

The Baptists were frequent targets for Wesley's sharpest barbs. He finds them "a carnal, caviling, contentious sect, always watching to steal away our children to make them as dead as themselves."[18]

Persecution usually arose from the performance of Christian duties, and Wesley uses images many times to refer to this obligation. Almost every possible image is utilized to explore the "working" relationship between God and the Pilgrim. One of the great Latin hymns ("Gloria, Laus, et Honor") usually omits the following stanza:

Be Thou, O Lord, the Rider,
And we the little ass,
That to God's Holy City,
Together we may pass.

---

[17] The vigor of the language is characteristic of the polemics of the time and is not unprecedented in Charles Wesley's writing. "The Fiend" is not a mortal, but a "lying spirit."

[18] See Wiseman, Charles Wesley, Evangelist and Poet, pp. 108-116. Wiseman discusses the clashes which Wesley had with other denominational leaders.

The present generation would probably smile at such words, although past generations could perhaps sing them with great reverence. This is possibly the only working relationship between God and man which Wesley has overlooked. Man is a servant, a slave, a soldier, an ambassador, a serf, a subject, a captive, a field hand, and a laborer. Quite frequently these images refer to actual physical work:

Come, let us away,
And his summons obey,
Who justly demands
The sweat of our brows, and the work of our hands;
His acceptable will
Let us gladly fulfil,
And rejoice in the Lord
Whose service on earth is our present reward.

None on earth can conceive
How happy we live
Who our labour pursue,
And do unto the Lord whatsoever we do:
When'er with a smile
He repays all our toil,
Of his favor possest
We an earnest obtain of our heavenly rest.

While earning our bread,
On the mercy we feed
Of a God reconcil'd,
The Father of mercies in Jesus the Child;
While he deigns to approve
Our service of love,
At his glory we aim,
And present our oblations in Jesus's Name.

O Father, impart
His grace to my heart,
To the heart of my friends,
And companions in toil, till our pilgrimage ends,
Till our work is all done,
And receiv'd to thy throne
Our Redeemer we see,
And inherit our fulness of heaven in Thee.
(XII, 312-313)

More often "work" referred to the religious duties of the Christian though Wesley felt that secular work was in itself a form of religious duty. He emphasized this means of serving God again and again, and he wrote hymns for all sorts of people to sing, which were really benedictions on various professions, trades, and employments.

The major religious duty of the Christian, according to Wesley, is to spread the gospel. For the most part this meant that every believer was to be a "preacher," and usually the gospel was to be carried to one of the more unfortunate members of society. Flew insists that Wesley purposed to teach through his hymns the lower orders--the boozers, the murderers, the harlots, and the thieves--and that by consorting with the outcasts of society the Methodists distinguished themselves from the other denominations of the age.[19] If the average man, uneducated and not trained to speak, must carry the gospel, it must be a simple gospel; however, John Wesley in his sermons and Charles Wesley in his hymns leaned toward simplicity. John, as a matter of fact, had a great contempt for the rich and "great." He once remarked to Charles "Observing some lords and ladies in my congregation, I endeavored to reduce my discourse to the level of their understanding."[20] This was not an unusual attitude. Dean Farrar, once asked how he managed to preach at Windsor to a congregation ranging from the royal family to the scullery maids, replied, "I prepare my sermon for the scullery maids, so that I can be sure the Queen will understand it."[21]

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[19] The Hymns of Charles Wesley: A Study of Their Structure, p. 65.

[20] Quoted in Charles Wesley and His Colleagues, p. 79.

[21] The Hymnody of the Christian Church, p. 112.

In any case, the duty of the Pilgrim was clear; he was to proclaim the truth. Almost three-fourths of the images used in Wesley's hymns refer to this Christian duty.

Worship itself, in the formal sense, is a "duty"; however, Wesley might well object to the word "formal." The most significant difference between the imagery of Wesley and Watts in this area is that Watts's hymns usually concern the individual looking to God, standing alone, whereas there is in Wesley's hymns a continual sense of comradeship. Quite subtly the imagery refers to groups or bands who are joined together in worship or work:

> What troubles have we seen,
> What mighty conflicts past,
> Fightings without, and fears within,
> Since we assembled last!
> (IV, 216)

Worship includes confession of sin, and Charles Wesley's confessional hymns are an example of the extent to which frankness and sincerity went. Confession of sins to each other caused the early Methodists to turn to God in collective confession:

> The devilish and the brutal lust
> To Thee we now confess;
> Cleanse us, O faithful God and just
> From all unrighteousness.
> (V, 111)

Communal worship is reflected in the imagery of the following hymn:

> Make us into one spirit drink,
> Baptize into Thy Name,
> And let us always kindly think,
> And sweetly speak the same.
> (II, 340)

And nothing could be more indicative of the nature of the early Methodist Societies than the lines:

All praise to our redeeming Lord,
  Who joins us by His grace,
And bids us, each to each restored,
  Together seek his face.
He bids us build each other up,
  And gathered into one,
To our High Calling's glorious hope
  We hand in hand go on.
(XII, 24)

References to the blessings of God upon His people occur thirty-three times. The imagery for the most part is quite conventional. The Christian will win a "Prize," or he will reap a "Harvest," or he will win a "Reward." Usually these are "spiritual" in nature rather than hard cash:

O Heavenly King, Look down from above,
Assist us to sing Thy Mercy and Love,
So sweetly o'reflowing, So plenteous the Store,
Thou still art bestowing, And giving us more.
(II, 177)

There are times when the metaphysical blessings from God are captured in the form of images:

JESUS to you his Fulness brings,
A feast of Marrow, and fat Things;
All, All in CHRIST is freely given,
Pardon, and Holiness, and Heaven.

The most frequent image Wesley uses to convey the sense of God's blessings on man is one drawn from some area of safety, such as the Shepherd image:

Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine
  The joy and desire of my heart,
For closer communion I pine,
  I long to reside where thou art;
The pasture I languish to find
  Where all who their Shepherd obey,
Are fed, on thy Bosom reclin'd,
  Are skreen'd from the heat of the day.

'Tis there with the lambs of thy flock,
  There only I covet to rest,
To lie at the foot of the Rock,
  Or rise to be hid on thy breast;
'Tis there I would always abide,
  And never a moment depart,
Concealed in the clift of thy side,
  Eternally held in thy heart.
(IX, 362-363)

Three final areas or doctrines which occur twenty times or more should be considered--death, heaven, and hell. Although Appendix C lists many more referents, I shall not discuss those that occur less frequently. This is not to say that they are not important, but it is true that certain doctrines were treated more often through imagery by Wesley than others. These last three referents compose, it seems to me, a unit; they are at the end of the Pilgrim's journey. Other doctrines refer primarily to the "battle" of life, but Wesley uses imagery almost exclusively when he speaks of death, hell, or heaven.

Hell is the referent of an image only twenty-three times. There is a widespread belief that the Wesleys made their converts through the threat of Hell and that fear was the dominant emotion aroused by their sermons. How far this was true of the lay preachers who helped them, and how far from true of themselves, may be gathered from a question printed in the minutes of the Conference of 1741.

> Q. Do not some of our assistants preach too much of the wrath and too little of the love of God?
> A. We fear that they have leaned to that extreme.

In all the 770 hymns contained in the 1779 Collection there is but one indexed under the title of "Hell," while twelve are devoted to the description of "Heaven," and sixty-eight are "For Believers Rejoicing."

It is extraordinary how relatively little the terrors of Hell are dealt with in the hymns of Wesley. Rattenbury suggests that the reason probably is that there was more widespread dread of the future punishment of sin in those days than in ours, and that there was less need for emphasis on this doctrine. (Evangelical Doctrines, p. 78)

One very strange fact appeared in my study: the hymns which threaten future woes were not written for the pagans of England, but for children; some of these compositions are horrible. How could the man who wrote "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," have written for children such a hymn as:

> Terrible thought! Shall I alone,
>   Who may be saved--shall I--
> Shall I,--amidst a ghastly band,--
>   Dragged to the judgement-seat,
> Far on the left with horror stand,
>   My fateful doom to meet?
> (VII, 233)

This is the only hymn on hell in the large hymn book of 1779--and it was one too many. It closes:

> While they enjoy His heavenly love,
>   Must I in torments dwell?
> And howl, (while they sing hymns above)
>   And blow the flames of hell?

Wesley simply does not apply his poetic gift to this subject. He occasionally takes images out of the Bible such as "A Brand pluck'd from Eternal Fire" (I, 91) or "To save poor Souls out of the Fire,/ to snatch them from the Verge of Hell" (V, 105), and inserts them as warnings. The only thing that could rouse Wesley's ire to the point that he could bring the Pit before us vividly through images was the mention of Calvinism or unauthorized ordination. Of this latter he wrote:

Ye that uncall'd the power assume,
Expect the rebels fearful doom;
The pit its mouth hath open'd wide
For *Jesu*'s sacrilegious foes!
Repent before its mouth it close
On all the hard'ned sons of pride.
(XIII, 129)

Wesley's most terrible images of Hell are in "The Horrible Decree" (III, 34-38), but the piece is satire directed against the Calvinists:

They think with Shrieks and Cries
To please the Lord of Hosts,
And offer Thee, in Sacrifice
Millions of slaughter'd Ghosts:
With New-born Babes they fill
The dire infernal Shade,
For such they say, *was thy Great Will*,
Before the World was made.

How long, O God, how long
Shall Satan's Rage proceed!
Wilt Thou not soon avenge the Wrong,
And crush the Serpent's Head!
Surely Thou shalt at last
Bruise him beneath our Feet:
The Devil, and his Doctrine cast
Into the burning Pit.

Even more biting is the following composition:

O All-embracing Love Divine
O All-illuminating Light,
Throughout the World victorious shine
Victorious o'er the Shades of Night.

The Smoak that issues from the Pit,
And darkens Heavens All-chearing Face,
Scatter; & bruise beneath our Feet
The bold Blasphemer of Thy Grace.

Let him blaspheme Thy Grace no more,
Or mock us while he calls it free,
Silence his reprobating Roar,
Cancel his Horrible Decree.
(VI, 239)

Wesley's references to Hell are few, and usually there is little attempt to capture the literal sense of the Bible. General references such as the following are much more common:

> Shall we then with sin comply,
>   Against our God rebel,
>   His authority defy
>   Who can destroy in Hell?
> He that doth to sin give way,
>   The glorious Trinity offends,
>   Treasures up against that day,
>   The Wrath that never ends.
> (VII, 284)

The image of treasure in Hell is the mirror-image of "treasures in Heaven," of course, but it is not particularly forceful. We must conclude that Wesley's hymns are not dependent on the "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" school of theology for their effectiveness; the love of God was the focus of his gospel, and the hymns reflect this emphasis.

Heaven in Wesley's verse is a "place"; it is where "Christ is." This is the basic idea, underlying all, in Wesley's imagery, and we cannot avoid this concept. In Wesley's day, of course everyone--religious and irreligious alike--looked beyond this mortal life. Heaven was the normal goal of a decent God-fearing individual, and hell was at least a terrible possibility to the ungodly. The change in our moral climate has had almost a comical effect on hymn books, for though hymns on heaven still remain, they are under suspicion. Older hymns with their confident expectations of heavenly bliss have been mercilessly trimmed by the omission of suspect verses, and Charles Wesley's hymns have not gone untouched in this respect. Everything is done to soft-pedal any appeal either to our hopes or fears concerning the hereafter.

Appendix C lists Heaven as a referent of an image eighty-three times, but if one includes synonyms such as "paradise," "sky," or "skies" the total would be much greater. The thought of heaven is everywhere, and Wesley draws from many areas for his "heavenly" images. The following stanzas employ the military image:

> That Arm which is not short'ned now,
>   Which wants not now the Power to save,
> Still present with thy People Thou
>   Bear'st them thro' Life's disparted Wave.
> By Earth and Hell persued in vain,
>   To Thee the ransom'd Seed shall come;
> Shouting their Heav'nly Sion gain,
>   And pass thro' Death triumphant home.
> (IV, 302)

Heaven is a "feast":

> He dispels our Sin and Sadness,
>   Life imparts,
>   Chears our Hearts,
> Fills with Food and Gladness.
> Who Himself for all hath given
>   Us He feeds,
>   Us he leads
> To a Feast in Heaven.
> (III, 367)

Images drawn from royalty abound:

> Finish then thy New Creation,
>   Pure and sinless let us be,
> Let us see thy great Salvation,
>   Perfectly restor'd in Thee;
> Changed from Glory into Glory,
>   Till in Heaven we take our Place,
> Till we cast our Crowns before Thee,
>   Lost in Wonder, Love, and Praise.
> (IV, 219)

And, of course, Heaven was a "place" where old friends could meet again:

> Come let us join our Friends above
>   That have obtain'd the prize,
> And on the eagle-wings of love
>   To Joy celestial rise;
> Let all the Saints terrestrial sing
>   With those to glory gone,
> For all the servants of our King
>   In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in Him,
  One Church above, beneath,
Tho' now divided by the stream,
  The narrow stream of death:
One Army of the living God,
  To his command we bow;
Part of his host hath cross'd the flood,
  And part is crossing now.

Ten thousand to their endless home
  This solemn moment fly,
And we are to the margin come,
  And we expect to die:
His militant, embodied host
  With wishful looks we stand,
And long to see that happy coast,
  And reach that heavenly land.

Our old companions in distress
  We haste again to see,
And eager long for our release
  And full felicity:
Ev'n now by faith we join our hands,
  With those that went before,
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands
  On that eternal shore.

Our spirits too shall quickly join,
  Like theirs, with glory crown'd,
And shout to see our Captain's sign
  To hear his trumpet sound:
O that we now might grasp our guide,
  O that the word were given!
Come Lord of hosts the waves divide,
  And land us all in heaven.
(VI, 215-216)

Stanza one offers several images; the most important is perhaps the method of gaining Heaven on "eagle-wings." Frequently the visual imagery of rising occurs as in "And rise to his Throne,/ and live with our JESUS eternally one" (IV, 113), or even more physically in:

Come then in all thy glory,
  The saints triumphant King,
Of all things transitory
  The flaming period bring:
And lo, out of the burning
  On angel's wings I fly,

And meet my Lord returning,
  And grasp Him in the sky!
(VIII, 370)

In the following hymn Wesley replaces wings with the more prosaic ladder to heaven:

  How dreadful is the Place
  Where God appoints to meet
Sinners that humbly seek his Face,
  And tremble at his Feet,
  Where to th' Assembled Crowd
  His promis'd Grace is given:
This is the solemn House of God,
  This is the Gate of Heaven!

  His Ordinance Divine
  He now vouchsafes to own,
Blessings herein & Duties join,
  And God and Man is One:
  The Sacramental Rite
  Which Jesus Love commands
Heaven & Earth by Faith t' unite
  Like Jacob's Ladder stands.

  On this mysterious Tree
  Where our Redeemer hung
Descending & ascending
  The bright Angelick Throng!
  They fill the hallow'd place
  While we his Death record,
And lost in silent wonder gaze
  On our Redeeming Lord.

  By Jesus Cross sustain'd
  Our souls to Heaven aspire,
Blessings by Jesus Cross descend
  And raise our raptures higher.
  The Ministers of Grace
  Swift to our succour move,
Our Guardians fill the middle space
  And God appears above!

  He calls us to the skies,
  And lo! we spurn the ground,
Light on the sacred Ladder rise
  And gain the topmost Round,
  Of Everlasting Life
  The glorious Pledge is given;
Another Step shall end the Strife,

And lodge us all in Heaven!
(XII, 212-213)

Unaccountably, Wesley transforms the "ladder" into a "tree" (cross) in stanza three, and this almost destroys the force of the image. This hymn is unique among Wesley's hymns on heaven, for the image is one of work; man is not lifted by God's power, but must struggle to achieve heavenly bliss by climbing a ladder. Far more typical is the following stanza containing the image of a master taking his servant "home":

Rejoice in Glorious Hope,
JESUS the Judge shall come;
And take his Servants up
To their Eternal Home:
We soon shall hear th' archangel's Voice,
The Trump.of God shall sound, Rejoice.
(IV, 141)

The following hymn contains practically every facet of Wesley's "heavenly" imagery:

And let our Bodies part,
To different Climes repair,
Inseparably join'd in Heart
The Friends of Jesus are:
Jesus the corner'Stone,
Did first our Souls unite;
And still He holds, and keeps us one,
Who walk with Him in White.

Then let us still proceed
In JESU's Work below,
And following our Triumphant Head,
To farther Conquests go;
The Vineyard of the Lord
Before his Labourers lies;
And lo! we see the vast Reward
That waits us in the Skies.

O let our Heart and Mind
Continually ascend,
The Haven of Repose to find,
Where all our Labours end,

  Where all our Grief is o'er,
  Our Suffering, and our Pain:
Who meet on that Eternal Shore
  Shall never part again.

  O happy, happy Place,
  Where Saints and Angels meet!
There we shall see each others Face,
  And all our Brethren greet,
  The Church of the first-born,
  We shall with them be blest,
And crown'd with endless Joy return
  To our eternal Rest.

  With Joy we shall behold
  In yonder blest Abode
The Patriarchs and Prophets old,
  And all the Saints of God;
  Abraham and Isaac there
  And Jacob shall receive
The Followers of their Faith and Prayer,
  Who now in Bodies live.

  We shall our Time beneath
  Live out in chearful Hope,
And fearless pass the Vale of Death,
  And gain the Mountain-top;
  To gather home his own
  God shall his Angels send,
And bid our Bliss on Earth begun
  In endless Triumphs end.
(V, 462-463)

This picture of heaven is not very different from the one Marc Connelly gives us in Green Pastures; there is a literal, actual feel about the whole place. One gets the impression that the gold in the streets of Heaven could be taken to an assay office and weighed on a scale. And it is not unlikely that Wesley felt this way about heaven--that the language of the Bible could be taken literally. In any case he chose to use images which offer a very physical representation of Heaven.

Death is linked to Heaven in most of Wesley's hymns. Of the forty references to physical death, twenty-six manage to include the idea that this experience is simply a door to man's next state of existence. In the two hymns quoted above, "And let our Bodies part" and "Come let us join our Friends above," this concept is quite clear, and in "Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd" the imagery of the completed battle is joined to that of the completed journey:

Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd,
(Our Loss is his infinite Gain)
A Soul out of Prison releas'd,
  And freed from its bodily Chain:
With Songs let us follow his Flight,
  And mount with his Spirit above,
Escap'd to the Mansions of Light,
  And Lodg'd in the Eden of Love.

Our Brother the Haven hath gain'd,
  Outflying the Tempest and Wind,
His Rest He hath sooner obtain'd,
  And left his Companions behind;
Still toss'd on a Sea of Distress,
  Hard toiling to make the Blest Shore,
Where all is Assurance and Peace,
  And Sorrow and Sin are no more.

There all the Ship's Company meet,
  Who sail'd with the Saviour beneath,
With shouting each other they greet,
  And triumph o'er Trouble and Death;
The Voyage of Life's at an End,
  The mortal affliction is past,
The Age that in Heaven they spend
  For ever and ever shall last.
(VI, 189-190)

Wesley mixes images in this case, and of different areas from which he draws there is no end; but instant escape into heaven is his theme--out of prison, from sickness, from storms at sea.

On at least one occasion Wesley attempts to convey the "sting of death"--the terror of it, but he simply fails to sustain the mood:

Stupendous height of heavenly love,
  Of pitying tenderness Divine!
It brought the Saviour from above,

  It caus'd the Springing Day to Shine,
The Sun of righteousness t' appear,
And gild our gloomy hemisphere.

God did in Christ himself reveal
  To chase our darkness by his light,
Our sin and ignorance dispel,
  Direct our wand'ring feet aright,
And bring our souls with pardon blest
To realms of everlasting rest.

In the final two stanzas Wesley attempts to describe the terrors of "our gloomy hemisphere," but with little success:

Come then, O Lord, the light impart,
  The faith that bids our terrors cease,
Into thy love direct my heart,
  Into thy way of perfect peace,
And chear my soul of death afraid,
  And guide me thro' the dreadful shade.

Answer thy mercy's whole design,
  My God incarnated for me,
My spirit make thy radiant shrine,
  My Light and full Salvation be,
And thro' the dreary vale unknown
Conduct me to thy dazling throne.
(XI, 114-115)

There is a battle in this hymn between darkness (death) and light (life), but despite words like "gloomy," "darkness," "dreadful shade," and "dreary vale" this is not a frightening hymn; the "light" imagery--"Sun," "day," "Light," "radiant," and "dazling" simply overcome the darker imagery. Again and again we find this urgency to be gone from the darkness of earth in Wesley's work:

Light of Life, to Thee I haste,
  Glad to quit this dark Abode,
Of thy Truth and Mercy cast,
  Longing to be lost in God,
Ready at thy Call to say,
Lo! I come, I come away!

Ministerial Spirits come,
  Spread your golden Wings for me,

Waft me to my Heavenly Home,
  Land me in Eternity,
Bear me to my Glorious Rest,
Take me to my Saviour's Breast.
(III, 168)

Sometimes this longing for death (or for Heaven) approaches a rather morbid state of mind:

Fain would I leave this Earth below,
  Of Pain and Sin the dark Abode;
Where shadowy Joy, or solid Woe
  Allures, or tears me from my God:
Doubtful and insecure of Bliss,
Since Death alone confirms me His.
(I, 50)

But death and Heaven are always inseparable from Christ in Wesley's work. There is the constant longing for Heaven (thus for Christ) but this can only come by crossing the stream of death:

When from the Arm of Flesh set free,
JESU, my Soul shall fly to Thee:
JESU, when I have lost my All,
My Soul shall on Thy Bosom fall.
(II, 258)

"The Methodists die well." This proverb is exemplified by Wesley's imagery, for the one clear concept behind practically all of it is that death is merely the gate to life.

CHAPTER VI

SUBJECT-MATTER CATEGORIES

Between Charles Wesley's secular poetry and his hymns a great gulf exists. His poetry written on subjects other than religion manifests an active, inquiring mind, and he draws heavily on his classical background for learned allusions. These compositions also reveal a pointed sense of humor and an awareness of current affairs. In his hymns, however, there is a certain narrowness which is the result of contraction; the hymn itself is confined to certain themes, and Wesley's range is, to some degree, restricted as a result. The range of categories from which he drew his images is also somewhat less extensive in his hymns than in his secular poetry, but it is impossible to determine whether this is deliberate or subconscious.

As I have indicated in Chapter One, the most dangerous temptation of an imagery study is to draw biographic inferences based on the tabulation of images. In the present chapter my major purpose is simply to point out the areas from which Wesley drew his images and not to relate these areas to his own life unless some connection can be clearly proven by means of other evidence.

Appendix D lists all of the various categories from which Wesley in my sampling drew his images. For the sake of convenience and to facilitate orderly discussion of them, I have grouped these into seven major divisions. The groups which I have listed under these major areas are frequently separated by a very thin line, for it is sometimes impossible to classify the image with complete accuracy. When Wesley writes, "The Prince of Peace goes forth to War," for example, it would be just as logical to place the image under the general heading of "Royalty" as to place it under "War." Since hard and fast classifications are sometimes impossible and since Wesley uses many images which had long ago lost their imagistic force, the value of this section of my paper is highly relative. The most that can be drawn from Appendix D is the fact that there are certain tendencies in Wesley's hymns; he draws frequently upon certain areas for images while practically ignoring other areas. In this chapter I shall point out these tendencies and list some of the images which are striking enough to warrant special attention.

The first group of images to be considered comes from the area of public life. Out of a total of 1,891 images classified according to area, this group of 588 is the largest.

None of the twenty-five images drawn from government is original or striking; for the most part they simply refer to the authority of God over the Christian in political terms, such as "God is the Governor of all,/ We yield ourselves to His Commands" (IV, 233). However, Wesley wrote many hymns which spoke directly of current politics. The following hymn was entitled "Hymn for Peace Occasioned by Some Public Troubles"; it is typical of Wesley's effort to relate political events to the providence of God and to the lives of Methodists:[1]

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[1] This hymn was inspired by the passage of the Stamp Act.

While blackning clouds o'respread the sky,
And discord's turbid waves run high,
  Are Christians free from care?
Conscious our life is hid above,
Yet still we must our Country love,
  And all her troubles share.

'Tis not for us to rule the state,
Or mingle in their high debate
  When Princes disagree:
Jehovah in their council stands,
And (for the Cause is in thy Hands)
  We leave it, Lord, to Thee.

Excus'd, our privilege we own,
We blame, arraign, and censure none
  That at the helm appear,
But quietly our souls possess,
Who worship Thee, the Prince of Peace,
  Who God and Caesar fear.

Yet danger national requires,
And draws out all our heart's desires
  For their prosperity;
Thy Church the common burthen feels,
Their present, and approaching ills
  With Jesus eyes we see.

With Jesus sympathy we cry,
Father of all, in troubles nigh
  Stir up thy helping power,
Their violence curb, controul their rage,
Nor let them war intestine wage,
  Each other to devour.

By whom Thou wilt the rescue send,
But bid their fierce contentions end,
  But suddenly suppress
And scatter who in war delight,
And by thy Providential might
  Restore the public peace.
(XII, 134-135)

This poem clearly represents Charles Wesley's answer to those who insist that a Christian must have nothing whatever to do with politics, but it is poor hymn writing. Wesley never learned to avoid "occasional" hymns, and one of his poorest works is Hymns of Intercession for All

Mankind (1758), which includes a prayer-hymn for every imaginable person--from the King down to "A Woman in Travail."

Wesley's images drawn from royalty are almost impossible to classify for the simple reason that he sprinkles his hymns liberally with traditional imagery which has lost all imagistic force. I have not included references to God as "King," nor the hundreds of references to the "equipment" of royalty such as thrones, sceptres, crowns, etc. Of the eighty-nine images drawn from this area, only a few are worthy of special attention. The following stanzas which picture the triumphant return of Christ to heaven capture partly through imagery the pageantry of heaven:

> There the pompous Triumph waits,
> Lift your Heads, Eternal Gates,
> Wide unfold the radiant Scene,
> Take the King of Glory in!
>
> Circled round with Angel Powers,
> Their Triumphant Lord, and ours,
> Conqueror over Death and Sin,
> Take the King of Glory in!
> (I, 187)

In his dreadful hymn celebrating the corpse of a believer, Wesley does manage to use one effective image drawn from royalty when he says:

> Ah! lovely Appearance of Death!
>   No sight upon Earth is so fair:
> Not all the gay Pageants that breathe
>   Can with a dead Body compare.
> (VI, 193)

Perhaps this sentiment does not command our admiration today, but we can feel the contrast between the "gay Pageants that breathe" and the "dead body." Except for this image and the four times that Wesley refers to Christ as the "Harbinger" there is little to attract attention in Wesley's images drawn from royalty.

War is a favorite category for Wesley, perhaps because biblical imagery frequently draws upon this area. Thirty-two times the Christian life is presented in terms of battle, as in the following hymn:

> Thy Power, and saving Grace to shew,
> A Warfare at thy Charge I go,
>   Strong in the Lord, and thy great Might,
> Gladly take up the hallow'd Cross,
> And suffering all Things for thy Cause,
>   Beneath thy Bloody Banner fight.
>
> A Spectacle to Fiends and Men,
> To all their fierce or cool Distain,
>   With calmest Pity I submit,
> Determin'd nought to know beside
> My JESUS and him crucify'd,
>   I tread the world beneath my Feet.
> (V, 135)

The image of warfare shifts in the second stanza to "a Spectacle" recalling the Roman arena, but the imagery of war in the first stanza is completed by the victorious final line of the second. Weapons of war are utilized for purposes of imagery forty-nine times; usually they are drawn from biblical imagery, as in "Soldiers of CHRIST Arise" (V, 40-44), where we find the traditional "Armour of God," the "Sword of the Spirit," the "Shield of Faith," and the "Helmet of Salvation." One other image drawn from the weapons of war is worthy of note; in the following stanza Wesley manages to unite the victorious coming of Christ with a militant spirit:

> His Chariot will not long delay:
> We hear the rumbling Wheels, and pray
> Triumphant Lord, appear.
> (VI, 96)

Closely related to these images of war are the references Wesley makes to peace, but these images are not particularly forceful. The image of captives being brought home in the following stanza is perhaps his best:

> Him, Eye to Eye, shall they behold,
>   Shall shout to see their Saviour come,
> To save a World redeem'd of old,
>   To bring the weary Captives home.
> (II, 171)

Or perhaps the following frequent theme of "God's Peace":

> Who publishes the joyful Sound,
>   Proclaims a Peace 'twixt Earth and Heaven.
> (IV, 123)

There are twenty-one images referring to the "Peace" mentioned in this stanza, and the remaining forty-six images in this area are simply titles drawn from military life, such as Christ as "Captain," and God as "Lord of Hosts."

From the area of law Wesley drew images almost as frequently as from war, but here again we must remember that many of these are biblical images. Thirty-nine images refer to a court, twenty-nine to a sentence, twenty-seven to a legal title, sixteen to an advocate, twelve to a judge, and seven to other legal matters. Frequently legal imagery is related to other areas; in the following stanza, for example, Jesus the Advocate is also Jesus the Friend:

> O let me commend
>   My Saviour to you,
> The Publican's Friend,
>   And Advocate too;
> For you He is pleading
>   His Merits and Death,
> With God interceeding
>   For Sinners beneath.
> (III, 6)

Christ is humanized and made more sympathetic by virtue of the fact that he is not only a legal representative but a personal friend. The image is strengthened by the fact that even though He is a Friend, he is also God. This concept of a powerful advocate is frequently conveyed:

> Our Advocate there
> By his Blood and his Prayer
> The Gift hath obtain'd.
> (IV, 203)

Legal imagery is intensified when Wesley allows Christ to be not only the Advocate but adds "Before the Throne my Surety stands" (II, 323). At times the imagery shifts so that Christ is also the Judge, as in "Jesus the Judge shall come" (III, 302).

In one sense legal imagery is the most significant area of all that Wesley employed. In a hymn entitled "For the Anniversary Day of One's Conversion" (I, 299-230) Wesley speaks in the first two stanzas of the "benighted Soul" that was his, then in the third stanza he says:

> Sudden expir'd the legal Strife,
> 'Twas then I ceas'd to grieve,
> My Second, Real, Living Life
> I then began to live.

This is in essence the conversion experience of Charles Wesley, and in this one case at least we may draw a biographical inference from the imagery. Again and again in his Journal, in his letters, and in his sermons he refers to the "legal night" or his experience in attempting to live up to the commandments of God. The most famous of these references occurs in the epitaph which he wrote for his mother:

> In sure and stedfast Hope to rise,
> And claim her Mansion in the skies,

A Christian here her Flesh laid down,
The Cross exchanging for the Crown.

True Daughter of Affliction she,
Enur'd to Pain and Misery,
Mourn'd a long Night of Griefs and Fears,
A Legal Night of Seventy Years.[2]

The Father then reveal'd his Son,
Him in the broken Bread made known,
She knew, and felt her Sins forgiven,
And found the Earnest of her Heaven.

Meet for the Fellowship above,
She heard the Call, 'Arise, my Love:
I come, her Dying Looks replied,
And Lamb-like as her Lord she died!
(V, 86)

The imagery of the third stanza is highly important. Wesley felt that Christians should know and feel their sins forgiven, and the use of the "Earnest" is one of the central images in his work. The pledge (or Earnest) is the knowledge through the Holy Spirit that one is forgiven, and it was this doctrine that led many to assign the term "enthusiasm" to the early Methodists. The matter of "being saved" was not a legal matter but was dependent upon faith; those who did not actually believe were in the "legal night." This image is by far the most potent which Wesley used, and it is safe to say that all those images which picture the sinner in "court" to receive his "sentence" before a stern "Judge" are didactic but not particularly forceful.

The final and perhaps most important area of public life from which Wesley drew his images is that of crime and punishment. I have listed in Appendix D 185 images which are drawn from this area, and sheer weight of numbers indicates that Wesley was keenly conscious of this facet of society. His verse is honey-combed with lines such as:

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[2] "Mrs. Wesley was 73 when she died, and whilst receiving Holy Communion in 1739 had experienced an assurance of her own acceptance with God. Her son seems to have been guilty of exaggeration, however, in speaking of her previous religion as 'a legal night.'" (Baker's note, Representative Hymns, p. 193)

> Long fast my imprison'd Spirit lay,
>   Fast bound in Sin and Nature's Night:
> Thine Eye diffus'd a quick'ning Ray;
>   I woke; the Dungeon flam'd with Light;
> My Chains fell off, my Heart was free,
> I rose, went forth, and follow'd Thee.
> (I, 106)

The imagery of this stanza could scarcely be improved, and Wesley seldom failed when he relied on prison imagery. He captures the horror of darkness, of suffocation, and of suffering almost every time he attempts this type of imagery:

> To mourn and to suffer is mine,
>   While bound in a Prison I breathe,
> And still for Deliverance pine,
>   And press to the Issues of Death. . . .
> (VI, 194)

And he is equally successful when he sings of the soul's release from a spiritual prison:

> Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd,
>   (Our Loss is his infinite Gain)
> A Soul out of Prison releas'd,
>   And freed from its bodily Chain:
> With Songs let us follow his Flight,
>   And mount with his Spirit above,
> Escap'd to the Mansions of Light,
>   And Lodg'd in the Eden of Love.
> (VI, 189)

In this case the imagery brings before us the soaring freedom of the escaped prisoner, and the light-darkness imagery serves to reinforce the effectiveness of the figure. Contrast the light of this stanza with the gloom of the following:

Absent from Thee, my exil'd Soul
  Deep in a Fleshly Dungeon groans;
Around me Clouds of Darkness roll,
  And lab'ring Silence speaks my Moans;
Come quickly, Lord! Thy Face display,
And look my Midnight into Day.
(I, 51)

And what image could be more brilliant than the following stanza:

Redeem'd from all his Woes,
  Out of his Dungeon freed,
Ask, how the Prisoner knows
  That He is free indeed!
How can He tell the Gloom of Night
  From the Meridian Blaze?
Or I discern the Glorious Light,
  That Streams from JESU's Face?
(V, 365)

To discuss in detail Wesley's prison ministry is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is evident that Wesley felt a special concern for felons. The "Holy Club" at Oxford made prison-visitation one of its important services to the community, and from the beginning Wesley devoted much time and effort to the pastoral care of criminals. He spent a great deal of his time in 1738 visiting criminals condemned to death and wrote many hymns for their special use (The last hymn book he published was for this group). Baker goes so far as to say that "his ministry at executions was undoubtedly one factor, however minor, in rousing public conscience against such spectacles,"[3] and Rattenbury maintains "that dying criminals should not have died cursing their fate, but joyously singing Wesley's hymns is one of the most amazing facts of the Revival."[4] The following is typical of the many hymns which Wesley wrote for criminals:

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[3] Representative Hymns, p. 229.

[4] Evangelical Doctrines, p. 248.

Return'd into thy kingdom, Lord,
  For good remember me,
And tell a penitent restor'd,
  I soon shall be with thee.

The offering of a broken heart
  Thou never wilt despise,
But while my soul and body part,
  Accept the sacrifice.

My spirit humbly I commend,
  To thy redeeming care,
My last important moments spend
  In penitence and prayer.

And if I may not testify
  On earth my sins forgiven,
Yet I, the poorest outcast I
  May praise thy love in heaven.[5]

Wesley was at this time not convinced that the "death bed" repentance of criminals about to be executed is sufficient for salvation. The following passages from his Journal in 1738 reveal clearly his own position on this matter and throw considerable light on the imagery he used the rest of his life--not only the prison imagery but the many images which indicate that man may be saved in one moment, by one look. It is also indicative of the imagery revealing the peace or the lack of fear which Wesley was convinced resulted from faith in Christ.

> Mon., July 10. At Mr. Spark's request, I went with him, Mr. Bray, and Mr. Burnham, to Newgate; and preached to the ten malefactors under sentence of death; but with a heavy heart. My old prejudices against the possibility of a death-bed repentance still hung upon me; and I could hardly hope there was mercy for those whose time was so short. But in the midst of my languid discourse, a sudden spirit of faith came upon me, and

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[5] "These prayers were answered, Thur. April 28, 1785, on nineteen malefactors, who all died penitent." Wesley's note appears on the MS of this hymn.

I promised them all pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, if they would then, as at the last hour, repent and believe the gospel. Nay, I did believe they would accept of the proffered mercy, and could not help telling them, 'I had no doubt but God would give me every soul of them.'

Wed., July 12. I preached at Newgate to the condemned felons, and visited one of them in his cell, sick of a fever; a poor Black that had robbed his master. I told him of One who had come down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular; described the sufferings of the Son of God, his sorrows, agony, and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment; the tears trickled down his cheeks while he cried: 'What! was it for me? Did God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?' I left him waiting for the salvation of God.

Sat., July 15. I preached there again with an enlarged heart; and rejoiced with my poor happy Black; who now believes the Son of God Loved him, and gave himself for him.

Tue., July 18. . . . At night I was locked with Bray in one of the cells. We wrestled in mighty prayer. All the criminals were present; and all delightfully cheerful. Joy was visible in all their faces. We sang:

Behold the Saviour of mankind,
  Nailed to the shameful tree!
How vast the love that him inclined
  To bleed and die for thee.

Wed., July 19. . . . At half-hour past nine their irons were knocked off, and their hands tied. I went in a coach with Sparks, Washington, and a friend of Newington's. By half-hour past ten we came to Tyburn, waited till eleven: then were brought the children appointed to die. I got upon the cart with Sparks and Broughton. I prayed first, then Sparks and Broughton. We had prayed before that our Lord would show there was a power superior to the fear of death. They were all cheerful; full of comfort, peace, and triumph; assuredly persuaded Christ had died for them, and waited to receive them into paradise.

The Black had spied me coming out of the coach, and saluted me with his looks. As often as his eyes met mine, he smiled with the most composed, delightful countenance I ever saw. Read caught hold of my hand in a transport of joy. Newington seemed perfectly pleased. Hudson declared he was never better, or more at ease, in mind or body. None showed any natural terror of death: no fear, or crying, or tears. All expressed their desire of our following them to paradise. I never saw such calm triumph, such incredible indifference to dying. We sang several hymns; particularly,

Behold the Saviour of mankind,
  Nailed to the shameful tree;

and the hymn entitled 'Faith in Christ,' which concludes:

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
  Into thy hands I fall:

> Be thou my life, my righteousness,
> My Jesus, and my all.
>
> We prayed him, in earnest faith, to receive their spirits. I could do nothing but rejoice; kissed Newington and Hudson; took leave of each in particular. Mr. Broughton bade them not be surprised when the cart should draw away. They cheerfully replied they should not; expressed some concern how we should get back to our coach. We left them going to meet their Lord, ready for the Bridegroom. When the cart drew off, not one stirred or struggled for life, but meekly gave up their spirits. Exactly at twelve they were turned off. I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd; and returned, full of peace and confidence in our friends' happiness. That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life.

This is merely one of many references in Wesley's Journal which relates his experiences with condemned felons; I have quoted at such length because it seems to me that the heart of the Methodist message is reflected in this situation. The Wesleys insisted again and again that they intended to preach to the outcasts of society and that the gospel is efficacious even to the worst of sinners. It is also quite evident that Wesley's imagery in this area is drawn from his own experience, and in my opinion the most dramatic and effective images which he employs are those which draw upon crime and punishment. In other areas he frequently uses whatever traditional imagery is at hand, but whenever he speaks of dungeons, chains, executions, or other facets of criminal punishment, there is a direct impact in his imagery. "That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life," he insisted, and the response of the condemned men no doubt had a profound effect on his own belief. Cynics may suggest that Wesley saw what he wanted to see in the condemned men; however, Charles Wesley is described by most of his contemporaries as a sensible man, and it is unlikely that he would invent all the details of this and other experiences with felons concerning their peace of mind. The prose account above is written in a plain, matter-of-fact style, and the behavior of the criminals during their last moments of life is quite believeable. In any case, there is no doubt but that Wesley himself believed in these conversions and in the resulting peace of mind which followed, and it is this steadfast faith in the effectiveness of the gospel even for dying men which made assurance part of the texture of his imagery.

One final image drawn from the area of crime is quite interesting. In the hymn which Wesley wrote defending the use of music as an instrument of divine power, he employed an image of piracy on the high seas. The first stanza indicates that music is often used for lewd purposes:

> Listed into the Cause of Sin,
>   Why should a Good be Evil?
> Musick, alas! too long has been
>   Prest to obey the Devil:
> Drunken, or lewd, or light the Lay
>   Flow'd to the Soul's Undoing,
> Widen'd, and strew'd with Flowers the Way
>   Down to Eternal Ruin.
>   (V, 397)

The primary image here is drawn from sailing. Music is personified; evil forces have "prest" or "listed" it into the service of evil exactly as men were "prest" or "listed" into naval service. But in the second stanza the imagery suddenly shifts to piracy:

> Who on the Part of God will rise,
>   Innocent Sound recover,
> Fly on the Prey, and take the Prize,
>   Plunder the Carnal Lover,
> Strip him of every moving Strain,
>   Every melting Measure,
> Musick in Virtue's Cause retain,
>   Rescue the Holy Pleasure?

With a sudden twist of thought, the people of God become "pirates," but their purpose is holy; they are to attack the enemy and recover "Innocent Sound" so that it may once again be employed in the service of God.

The second major grouping of images comes from nature. Included here are references to plants, animals, minerals, earth, fire, weather, seasons, and water. I have listed 377 images drawn from these areas, but Wesley's rather limited use of nature is quite obvious.

Aside from the biblical "Tree of Life" only two types of trees are mentioned. In one instance, speaking of pride Wesley says, "Nor can by folly's fig-leaves hide/ Your glaring nakedness of pride" (VI, 312), and:

> Ev'n now thy searching eye perceives
>   Thy fugitives among the trees,
> Veiling their shame with virtuous leaves,
>   (The fig-leaves of self-righteousness)
> Willing themselves to justify,
> And Thee with thy own gifts to buy.
> (IV, 148)

These images refer not to the tree itself, but to the leaves, and Wesley draws on the Genesis story for his image. The palm tree is mentioned twice, but the image is quite conventional. Four times the cross is referred to as a tree in lines such as, "By all thy Passion on the Tree/ Let all our Griefs and Troubles cease" (III, 229). In the following stanza Wesley begins with the image of a tree, but somehow the tree becomes a vine:

> Of Life Thou art the Tree,
> My Immortality!
> Feed this tender Branch of thine,
> Ceaseless Influence derive,
> Thou the true, the heav'nly Vine,

Grafted unto Thee I live.
(I, 97)

The vine image is used effectively at least once:

Planted by thine Almighty Hand,
  Watered with Blood, the Vine took Root,
And spread throughout the happy Land,
  And filled the Earth with golden Fruit.

The Hills were cover'd with her Shade,
  Her branchy Arms extending wide
Their fair luxuriant Honours spread,
  And flourish'd as the Cedar's pride.
(VIII, 161)

A relative indifference to plant life is characteristic of Wesley's imagery in the area of nature. In only one hymn does he make any attempt to speak of the beauty of nature in the manner of the poets of the Romantic Period, and even this effort is marked by a vague abstraction:

Hence, lying world, with all thy care,
With all thy shews of good or fair,
  Of beautiful or great!
Stand with thy slighted charms aloof,
Nor dare invade my peaceful roof,
  Or trouble my retreat.

Far from thy mad fantastic ways,
I here have found a resting place
  Of poor wayfaring men:
Calm as the hermit in his grot,
I here enjoy my happy lot,
  And solid pleasure gain.

Along the hill or dewy mead
In sweet forgetfulness I tread,
  Or wander thro' the grove,
As Adam in his native seat,
In all his works my God I meet
  The object of my love.

I see his beauty in the flower;
To shade my walks, and deck my bower,
  His love and wisdom join:

Him in the feather'd quire I hear,
And own, while all my soul is ear,
  The music is divine!

In yon unbounded plain I see
A sketch of his immensity
  Who spans these ample skies,
Whose presence makes the happy place,
And opens in the wilderness
  A blooming paradise.

O would he now himself impart,
And fix the Eden in my Heart
  The sense of sin forgiven,
How should I then throw off my load,
And walk delightfully with God,
  And follow Christ to heaven!
(VII, 179-180)

This is pretty thin poetry as far as description of nature is concerned, but Wesley led a busy life in the active world; it may be that he simply was not sensitive to the outward aspects of nature. In any case, the imagery drawn from plant life is scanty indeed.

The eagle and the dove represent Wesley's total output as far as bird life is concerned. Several of his images referring to the Holy Spirit are biblical echoes (Matthew 3:16; Mark 10:16):

Expand Thy Wings, Prolific Dove,
  Brood o'er our Nature's Night;
On our disorder'd Spirits move,
  And let there now be Light.
(I, 238)

One of his short Scripture Hymns refers to the Song of Solomon 2:2 with the image of a dove:

The scatter'd clouds are fled at last,
The rain is gone, the winter past,
The lovely vernal flowers appear,
The warbling quire enchant our ear:
  Now with sweetly pensive moan
  Coos the turtle-dove alone.
(IX, 363)

These hymns were not, however, used for congregational singing to any great extent. The following is also one of the Scripture Hymns:

Who, what are these, that as a cloud
  Swiftly divide the darkned sky,
Like flocking doves, a countless croud,
  Like doves which to their windows fly!
Weary of wandring after rest,
  Lo, to the ark, the church, they come,
And housing in their Saviour's breast
  Haste by an heavenly instinct home.
(IX, 454)

Wesley never wrote better lines than this from the standpoint of imagery. The eagle appears twice, and each time the image is drawn from the Bible (Exodus 19:4; Psalms 103:5; Isaiah 40:31):

Vyeing with that happy Quire
  Who chaunt thy Praise above,
We on Eagles Wings aspire,
  The Wings of Faith and Love.
(V, 279)

  Beyond the Bounds of Time and Space,
Look forward to that happy Place,
  The Saints secure Abode,
On Faith's strong Eagle Pinions rise,
And force your Passage to the Skies,
  And scale the Mount of God.
(V, 168)

Wesley's use of animal imagery is quite uninspiring. The biblical image of the lamb is used twenty-seven times and that of the sheep twenty times. Insects are not used at all unless "The sting of death" be counted as insect imagery. The hart (borrowed from biblical imagery, Psalm 42:1) is used in five images, such as "the bounding hart." Oxen are mentioned five times but in such traditional phrases as "Knows the ox his master's stable" (III, 163). Reptile imagery occurs six times (if one counts "Antient Dragon" as a reptile). The most effective use of this imagery occurs in the following:

O that I could look to thee,
Jesus, lifted up for me,
Me a wounded Israelite,
Me expiring in thy sight!

Guilt the serpent's sting I feel,
Anguish inconceivable,
Bleeding, gasping on the ground,
Dying of the poisonous wound.

But with a believing eye
If I can my Lord espy,
Hanging on the Sacred Pole,
I, ev'n I, shall be made whole.

Give me now to find thee near,
Now as crucified appear;
Life is thro' thy wounds alone,
Mine to heal, display thine own.
(XIII, 152-153)

Here, of course, Wesley refers to the story of the fiery serpents as a punishment on the Israelites: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it shall live" (Numbers 21:9). Wesley's use of dramatic monologue is, however, quite effective in this case. In one stanza Wesley attacks those who differed with him on theological matters through animal imagery:

The Boar out of the German Wood
  Tears up her Roots with baleful Power;
The Lion roaring for his Food,
  And all the Forest Beasts devour.
(VIII, 165)

The tiger is used once, and the imagery is quite effective despite the fact that there is a rapid shift in the imagistic pattern:

Come, Lord, and tame the tiger's force,
  Arrest the whirlwind in my will,
Turn back the torrent's rapid course,
  And bid the headlong sun stand still,
The Rock dissolve, the mountain move,
  And melt my hatred into love.
(II, 155)

The animal image is relatively minor, and Wesley leaves the figure abruptly for water imagery, which he strongly favored.

The most maligned animal image in Wesley's work is the worm. No doubt many who see man as a noble creature feel that this is an absurd comparison, but it is drawn straight out of the Bible[6] and all eighteenth-century hymn writers used it--many of them much more often than Wesley. Only five times did Charles Wesley use this image, and even though he believed that man is a corrupt being by nature, his most potent metaphors to represent this condition were drawn from criminal imagery. Of his five uses of worm image, three are not completely honest. One occurence is in a hymn that Wesley published once, but refused to print in subsequent editions of his work. There is no secondary evidence to the effect that he was angry when he wrote it, but the entire "hymn" is a white-hot dart aimed at men with slanderous tongues. The image of a poisonous serpent in the first stanza lends a vitriolic effect to the entire hymn:

> Our Christian savages expect
> That by the hellish viper stung
> We soon shall feel the dire effect,
> The poison of a slanderous tongue,
> And gasp our last infected breath,
> And die the everlasting death.
>
> But lo, the tooth of calumny
> Calm and unmov'd we still abide,
> From nature's fretful passion free,

---

[6] Many Hebrew words are translated "worm," all indicative of something loathsome, destructive, helpless, or insignificant. Typical of biblical references are "How much less man, that is a worm?" (Job 25:6) and "Fear not, thou worm, Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel" (Isaiah 41:14)

  Hasty revenge and swelling pride;
Men cannot their own spirit impart,
Or taint a pure, believing heart.

Ourselves with Jesus' mind we arm
  And our envenom'd foes confound,
Defy their sharpest words to harm,
  Or once inflict the slightest wound,
While all the power of faith we prove
  In meek invulnerable love.

Let Satan still their tongues employ,
  The vipers fasten'd on our fame,
The deadly things can not annoy,
  Shook off at last into the flame;
But O, they never can expire
The worms in that infernal fire![7]
(X, 219-220)

Apparently Wesley is not so much concerned with man in general as a worm, but with his desire to see some particular "worms" in hell. There are two other uses of the worm in a rather satiric sense, both in his poem called "The Horrible Decree" (III, 34-38). Both uses of the word are slaps at the Calvinists:

  O Gracious, loving Lord;
  I feel thy Bowels yearn;
For those who slight the Gospel-Word
  I share in thy Concern:
  How art Thou griev'd to be
  By ransom'd Worms withstood!
How dost Thou bleed afresh to see
  Them trample on thy Blood!

  To limit Thee they dare,
  Blaspheme Thee to thy Face,
Deny their Fellow-Worms a share
  In thy redeeming Grace:
  All for their own they take,
  Thy righteousness engross,
Of none Effect to most they make
  The Merits of thy Cross.

---

[7] Wesley may have drawn his imagery here from the Bible. Paul after being shipwrecked was bitten by a serpent, and "He shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they look when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead" (Acts 28:5,6).

Obviously Wesley is making no comment on the nature of man by his use of worms as an image, but is stabbing pointedly at those who insist that all men are worms--but that some are wormier than others! The first image is ludicrous when one thinks of a worm "trampling" on anything, and the use of the word "ransom'd" in conjunction with "Worms" is also slightly silly.

There are, however, two instances of the worm as an image of man's nature which are completely serious. The first occurs in one of Wesley's Nativity Hymns:

> All-wise, all-good, almighty Lord,
> JESUS, by highest Heaven ador'd,
> E'er Time its Course began,
> How did thy glorious Mercy stoop
> To take the fallen Nature up,
> When Thou thyself wert Man?
>
> Th' Eternal God from Heav'n came down,
> The King of Glory dropp'd his Crown,
> And veil'd his Majesty,
> Empty'd of all but Love He came;
> JESUS, I call Thee by the Name
> Thy Pity bore for me.
>
> O holy Child, still let thy Birth
> Bring Peace to us poor Worms of Earth,
> . . . .
> (IV, 120)

In this particular hymn Wesley is attempting to show the vast gulf between the nature of God and man in order to convey the tremendous price God paid in Christ. The imagery of the first two stanzas is drawn from royalty, and Wesley pulls out every stop to capture the majesty of God. The sudden appearance of "poor Worms" in the third stanza achieves its force by the preparation which Wesley has made through the use of images drawn from royalty, and the effectiveness of the image is a result of Wesley's poetic imagination. The same method (from a different point of view) is achieved in one of his Hymns On the Lord's Supper. According to good Methodist doctrine the Lord's Supper is more than worship; it is a time of examination or self-evaluation.[8] In other words, Wesley desired for men to see themselves as they were, and this included some exercise in humility. What better way, then, to humble the individual than to have him sing the following hymn:

> Vilest of the fallen Race,
>   Lo! I answer to thy Call,
> Meanest Vessel of thy Grace,
>   (Grace divinely free for All)
> Lo, I come to do thy Will,
> All thy Counsel to fulfil.
>
> If so poor a Worm as I
>   May to thy great Glory live,
> All my Actions sanctify,
>   All my Words and Thoughts receive:
> Claim me, for thy Service, claim
>   All I have, and all I am.
>   (III, 333)

The weight of evidence indicates that Wesley used animal imagery to a very slight degree, and that with a few exceptions, most of these images are not particularly vivid or forceful.

There are thirty-two mineral images. Precious metals are sometimes used as in the following stanza:

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[8] Paul includes the following warning in his instructions for taking the Lord's Supper: "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (I Corinthians 11:27-29).

Wisdom Divine! Who tells the Price
Of Wisdom's costly Merchandize!
Wisdom to Silver we prefer,
And Gold is Dross compared to Her.
(IV, 234)

And it is without surprise that we read in the next stanza of precious jewels:

Better is she than richest Mines,
All earthly Treasures she outshines,
Her Value above Rubies is,
And precious Pearls are vile to this.

These images come directly from the Bible, as do the figures portraying Christ as a rock and as a magnet "to draw all men unto Him" (V, 11). Twice there are images of the heart drawn from mineral substance. "Ready the Spirit of Love/ Just now the Stony to remove" (V, 63) is a rather annoying metonymy of speaking about "the Stony" instead of "the Stony heart," and in later hymns Wesley revised this figure:

God only knows the Love of God,
O that it now were shed abroad
  In this poor stony Heart!
(IV, 341)

"Ah! lovely Appearance of Death!" (VI, 193) uses mineral imagery with reference to a dead body. The body is "beautiful Clay," "Innocent Clay," and "This Earth." Closely related to this is Wesley's reference to the flesh as "sinful Dust and Ashes (I, 74). These images compose the entire stock of Wesley's use of minerals as a source.

I have listed under the category of Nature forty images drawn from earth. Basically these refer to the landscape and to some degree are mineral, but as was true with Wesley's meager use of images drawn from plant life, we find few good images in this area. "The Vale of Tears" (or any low ground) inevitably becomes a figure representing the Christian's spiritual ebb, and any hill or mountain, of course, is the high tide. The following stanza appears in different guise at least fifteen times in Wesley's hymns:

We shall our Time beneath
  Live out in chearful Hope,
And fearless pass the Vale of Death,
  And gain the Mountain-top.
(V, 463)

The only good imagery in this area occurs in a single stanza which pictures the last day, and the excellence of these lines is due to the cosmic violence which Wesley captures:

Stand th' Omnipotent Decree,
  Jehovah's Will be done!
Nature's End we wait to see,
  And hear her final Groan:
Let this Earth dissolve, and blend
  In Death the Wicked and the Just,
Let those pondrous Orbs descend,
  And grind us into Dust.
(VI, 94)

The violence of those last two lines is quite effective. In _Hymns Occasioned by the Earthquake_ (1750) he wrote many stanzas which are imagistically powerful, such as the following:

Rising in thy dreadful might
  The wicked to rebuke,
Thou hast with unwonted fright
  Our sleeping bodies shook;
Earth did to her center quake,
  Convulsive pangs her bowels tore;
Shake, our inmost spirits shake,
  And let us sleep no more.
(VI, 20)

Earth is personified here as a wounded animal, and Wesley takes the earthquake quite personally; it is the Lord's doing for the purpose of rebuking the wicked and awaking men out of sleep. Wesley can be effective when the earth is in turmoil, but Wordsworth's verdant hills and sleepy pastures he almost completely ignores.

Fire is used for imagery a total of twenty-six times, and most of these figures are drawn from scripture, such as "A Brand pluck'd from the Fire" (I, 93). Twice fire is symbolic of affliction:

Strive we, in Afflection strive:
Let the purer Flame revive,
Such as in the Martyrs glow'd,
Dying Champions for their God.
We, like them, may live and love,
Call'd we are their Joys to prove;
Sav'd with them from future Wrath,
Partners of like pretious Faith.
(I, 350)

While in Affliction's Furnace,
And passing thro' the Fire,
  Thy Love we praise
  Which knows our Days,
And ever brings us nigher.
We clap our Hands exulting
In Thine Almighty Favour;
  The Love Divine
  Which made us Thine
Shall keep us Thine forever.
(IV, 79)

In the next stanza of this latter hymn Wesley in effect puts out Affliction's fire; he says "Thou dost conduct thy People/ Thro' Torrents of Temptations." Another effective use of fire imagery is found in the lines, "Still the attoning Blood is near,/ That quenched the Wrath of Hostile Heav'n" (I, 105). This image is expanded in another stanza:

I want an even strong Desire,
  I want a calmly-fervent Zeal,
To save poor Souls out of the Fire,
  To snatch them from the Verge of Hell,
And turn them to the Pardning God,
And quench the Brands in JESU's Blood.

This is far more effective than the usual "washed-in-the-blood" image, and the visual image is quite good. The Holy Spirit is spoken of in fire imagery twice; He is "The Source of the Old Prophetic Fire" (I, 238) and He "burns" in the human heart:

> O Thou who camest from above,
> The pure, celestial fire t' impart,
> Kindle a flame of sacred love
> On the mean altar of my heart;
> There let it for thy glory burn
> With inextinguishable blaze,
> And trembling to its Source return,
> In humble prayer, and fervent praise.
>
> JESUS, confirm my heart's desire
> To work and speak, and think for thee,
> Still let me guard the holy fire,
> And still stir up thy gift in me,
> Ready for all thy perfect will
> My acts of faith and love repeat,
> 'Til death thy endless mercies seal,
> And make my sacrifice compleat.
> (IX, 58-59)

Wesley draws on biblical symbolism in this case, but the imagery is his own.

One other image of fire is quite effective; it is found in a hymn that is usually printed under the title, "After Preaching to the Newcastle Colliers."[9]

> See how great a Flame aspires,
> Kindled by a Spark of Grace!
> JESU's Love the Nations fires,
> Sets the Kingdoms on a Blaze.
> To bring Fire on Earth he came;
> Kindled in some Hearts it is;

---

[9] Baker indicates that this hymn was written for the coalminers in Staffordshire, probably in 1743. He also suggests that it may have been suggested by the glow of the colliery fires lighting up the skies (Baker, Representative Hymns, p. 110).

O that All might catch the Flame,
  All partake the Glorious Bliss!

When He first the Work begun,
  Small and feeble was his Day;
Now the Word doth swiftly run,
  Now it wins its widening Way,
More and more it spreads, and grows,
  Ever mighty to prevail,
Sin's strong-holds it now o'erthrows,
  Shakes the trembling Gates of Hell.

The visual image of a forest fire is given step by step--from the small spark to the mighty sweep of a raging flame. The last stanza offers relief, for as often happens after a fire image, there is a shower from the heavens:

Saw ye not the Cloud arise
  Little as an Human Hand?
Now it spreads along the Skies,
  Hangs o'er all the thirsty Land!
Lo! the Promise of a Shower
  Drops already from above;
But the Lord shall shortly pour
  All the Spirit of his Love.
(V, 120-121)

There is some confusion in the imagery of this hymn, for the work of the Holy Spirit is conveyed through both fire and water imagery. Perhaps Wesley was so accustomed to providing a little water after fire imagery referring to hell or affliction that in this case he simply forgot himself. Either image is effective alone, but together they cancel each other. Still, this is probably the most effective use of fire imagery (at least the first two stanzas) in Wesley's work.

Water imagery is extremely difficult to classify in Wesley's hymns. In the first place, there is a great deal of it, and the difficulty is compounded by the fact that water can be classified under several different categories. I have listed seventy-three images under nature, but there are many more which I have placed under travel (sea), weather, and washing. Quite possibly water in all its forms may be the most significant area from which Wesley draws his images. The majority of the seventy-three images which I have listed under nature refer to either the sea, streams, or fountains. Of the many images utilizing the sea I have selected three which seem particularly good. In one instance the nature of God is represented by the sea:

> Thy goodness and thy truth to me,
>   To every soul abound,
> A vast unfathomable sea,
>   Where all our thoughts are drown'd;
> Its streams the whole creation reach,
>   So plenteous is the store,
> Enough for all, enough for each,
>   Enough for evermore.
>   (IX, 55)

This image is extended by the use of the individual as a "drop" within the "sea" that is God:

> A Drop of that unbounded Sea,
> O God, resorb it into Thee,
> While both our Souls with restless Strife[10]
> Spring up into eternal life,
> And lost in endless Raptures prove
> Thy whole Immensity of Love.
>   (V, 418)

The most common use of the sea is as the "road" which the individual must travel to get to God:

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[10] This is one of the poems which Charles Wesley wrote during his courtship of Sarah Gwynne. John Wesley included it in Hymns and Sacred Poems of 1749, but disguised the personal nature of the poem by changing "both" to "all." See Baker's note, Representative Hymns, p. 198.

Let the winds blow, and billows roll,
Hope is the anchor of the soul:
But can I by so slight a tie,
An unseen hope, on God rely?
Steadfast and sure it cannot fail,
It enters deep within the veil,
It fastens on a land unknown,
And moors me to my Father's throne.
(XIII, 135)

Even Emily Dickinson's "I never saw a Moor" said it no better. The first quatrain makes the statement "Hope is the anchor," but the last line brings into question the security, the soundness of faith. The final quatrain ties together biblical imagery "deep within the veil" with the image of the mysterious deeps of ocean, then triumphantly proclaims that the anchor of faith, though "a slight tie," is sufficient to moor the soul to God.

Frequently Wesley uses the imagery of a stream to indicate the nature of life, such as "Our time as a stream/ Glides swiftly away" (VI, 14). Five times he uses a stream to symbolize death, and the following stanza appears to be the most effective of this group:

One family we dwell in Him,
  One Church above, beneath,
Tho' now divided by the stream,
  The narrow stream of death:
One Army of the living God,
  To his command we bow:
Part of his host hath cross'd the flood,
  And part are crossing now.
(VI, 215)

Other images of streams are usually part of the "Blood-and Wounds" school, such as "For you the purple Current flow'd/ In pardons from his wounded Side" (I, 92).

Seven times a fountain is used as an image to carry the concept of God working through man or of God's blessings upon man.

Of Life the Fountain Thou,
I know--I feel it Now!
Faint and dead no more I droop:
Thou art in me: Thy Supplies
Ev'ry Moment springing up
Into Life Eternal rise.
(I, 97)

Usually Wesley confined his water imagery to a single line, or at the most to a stanza; however, in one hymn he maintained an extended image of water throughout. It has not been a popular hymn, having been reprinted only twice during Wesley's lifetime, but this can be accounted for by the fact that it is a little too close to the Moravian tradition. It is an excellent example of Wesley's tendency to "overstate" his case through the use of too many images.

Melt happy Soul, in JESU's Blood,
Sink down into the Wounds of God,
And there forever dwell:
I now have found my Rest again,
The Spring of Life, the Balm of Pain
In JESU's Wounds I feel.

Thirsty so long, and weak and faint,
I here enjoy whate'er I want,
The sweet refreshing Tide
Brings Life and Peace to dying Souls;
And still the gushing Comfort rolls
From JESU's wounded Side.

Swift as the panting Hart I fly,
I find the Fountain always nigh,
And Heavenly Sweetness prove,
Pardon, and Power, and Joy, and Peace,
And pure Delight, and Perfect Bliss,
And everlasting Love.

The World can no refreshment give:
Shall I its deadly Draughts receive,
Scoup'd from the Hellish Lake?
Nay, but I turn to the pure Flood,
Which issues from the Throne of God,
And Living Water take.

Soon as I taste the liquid Life,
Sorrow expires, and Pain, and Strife,
  And Suffering is no more:
My inmost Soul refresh'd I feel,
And fill'd with Joy unspeakable
  The bleeding Lamb adore.

I now the broken Cisterns leave;
My all of Good from God receive,
  And drink the crystal Stream:
The crystal Stream doth freely flow
Thro' Hearts which only JESUS know,
  And ever pants for Him.

How vast the Happiness I feel,
When JESUS doth Himself reveal,
  And His pure Love impart,
Holy Delight, and Heavenly Hope,
And everlasting Joy springs up
  And overflows my Heart.

He pours his Spirit into my Soul,
The thirsty Land becomes a Pool,
  I taste the unknown Peace
Such as the World will not believe;
No carnal Heart can e'er conceive
  Th' unutterable Bliss.
(III, 168-171)

This is not good poetry, of course, but it is the extreme pole of Wesley's tendency to use water imagery. This excessive use of figures of speech is not apparent in most of his hymns, for he ordinarily uses them more sparingly.

The final group of images under the heading of Nature includes those drawn from weather or the heavens. The distinctions are not completely clear for this category, for they include images drawn from several areas only indirectly related. They are related in one sense, however, for they all are in some sense from the sky.

Two of Wesley's images are cosmic in scope:

That All-informing Breath Thou art
Who dost Continued Life impart,

  And bidst the World persist to Be:
Garnish'd by Thee yon azure Sky
And all those beauteous Orbs on high
  Depend in Golden Chains from Thee.
(IV, 198)

The image of jewelry is united with that of heavenly bodies to convey the magnificence of the heavens, but somehow it fails to work when we realize that when the orbs are visible the sky isn't azure. Far more effective are the following lines:

Sovereign, Everlasting Lord,
  How excellent thy Name!
Held in Being by thy Word,
  Thee all Thy Works proclaim:
Thro' this earth thy Glories shine,
  Thro' those dazling Worlds above,
All confess the Source Divine,
  Th' Almighty God of Love.

Yet when I survey the Skies
  And Planets as they roll,
Wonder dims my aching Eyes,
  And swallows up my Soul;
Moon and Stars so wide display,
  Chaunt their Maker's Praise so loud,
Poor insufferable Day,
  And draw me up to God!

It is impossible to read the first line of this last stanza without wondering if he consciously or unconsciously borrowed from Watts' famous "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." The point of view, however, is quite different; Watts is looking at the cross and Wesley's eyes are fixed on the heavens. The hymn closes by contrasting the diminutive stature of man with the magnificence of God's heavens:

What is Man, that Thou, O Lord,
  Hast such Respect to Him!
Comes from Heaven th' incarnate Word,
  His Creature to redeem:
Wherefore would'st Thou stoop so low?
  Who the Mystery shall explain?

God is Flesh, and lives below,
  And dies for wretched Man.
(VIII, 15-16)

The image of the entire heavens, the stars, the planets is the background against which the "worm" is thrown, and Wesley's point that God's love for such an insignificant creature is a "Mystery" is carried by his use of heavenly images.

Wesley's images involving the sun are usually closely related to the light-darkness theme.

On this glad Day the glorious Sun
  Of Righteousness arose,
On my benighted Soul he shone,
  And filled it with Repose.
(I, 299)

The soul of man is "dark," but God the "Sun" will bring light; this is the substance of practically all of his imagery using this figure. Wesley usually does this very well, but far too often. In the following lines he stresses the "Day" which will come to the believer:

Stupendous height of heavenly love,
  Of pitying tenderness Divine!
It brought the Saviour from above,
  It caus'd the Springing Day to shine,
The Sun of righteousness t' appear,
  And gild our gloomy hemisphere.

God did in Christ himself reveal
  To chase our darkness by his light,
Our sin and ignorance dispel,
  Direct our wand'ring feet aright,
And bring our souls with pardon blest
  To realms of everlasting rest.
(XI, 114)

The following stanza is an indication of Wesley's use of night as an image of despair:

Light of those whose dreary Dwelling

Borders on the Shades of Death,
Come, and by thy Love's revealing
Dissipate the Clouds beneath:
The New Heaven and Earth's Creator,
In our deepest Darkness rise,
Scattering all the Night of Nature,
Pouring Eye-sight on our Eyes.
(IV, 116)

The imagery in the last two lines of this stanza is striking, particularly the image of "pouring" eyesight. Concerning the moon Wesley had only one image--a text-book example of hyperbole:

I rode on the Sky
(Freely justified I!)
Nor envied Elijah his Seat;
My Soul mounted higher
In a Chariot of Fire,
And the Moon it was under my feet.
(IV, 408)

The only star imagery in my sampling:

'See the Day-spring from afar
'Usher'd by the Morning Star!
Haste; to Him who sends the Light,
Hallow the Remains of Night.
Souls, put on your glorious Dress,
Waking into Righteousness:
Cloath'd with Christ aspire to shine,
Radiance He of Light Divine;
Beam of the Eternal Beam,
He in God, and God in Him!
Strive we Him in Us to see,
Transcript of the Deity.

In this stanza Wesley softens the blazing light of the sun (his favorite symbol for God), and the mellow light of the Morning Star reflects not only the gentle aspects of Christ's nature, but is the symbol of hope. The night dominates the first four lines, then the first gleam of the Day-spring begins to shatter the darkness until finally there is the radiance of Light Divine. Two other images are interwoven with star imagery; the line "Souls, put on your glorious

Dress" is connected by the word "glorious" to star imagery and is an echo of numerous biblical images, such as "Ye are the light of the world." The final image, "Transcript of the Deity," is unusual, and the syntax would make it almost impossible for one to catch the meaning on a first reading. Probably Wesley could have done better had he avoided this final image. Aside from this one hymn Wesley uses only conventional image such as "dazling worlds" and "starry crown."

From the weather Wesley draws a total of forty-five images, including six from rain, four from wind, nine from clouds, and twenty-six from storms.

Five of the images drawn from rain reflect the manner in which the blessings of God fall upon men. "Thy Gifts, and thy Graces/ Pour'd down from above" (III, 6) and "God on us in gracious showers/ Blessings every moment pours" (VI, 387) are the best of these, but there is nothing original about either. Only one image in this category has any force, and it is perhaps too close to the Moravian "Blood-and-Wounds" school:

> See, Sinners, see
> He dies for me,
> For You his Life he Pours!
> Blessings rain from yonder Tree
> In eternal Showers.
>
> Come catch the Blood,
> And Life of God,
> And lose your guilty Fears,
> Rise, releas'd from all your Load,
> JESUS' Cross appears!
> (V, 58)

Of the nine cloud images two refer to God. One is a visual image of God:

With glorious clouds incompast round
  Whom angels dimly see,
Will the Unsearchable be found,
  Or God appear to me?
(VII, 194)

The other refers to the promise of God's providential care:

Saw ye not the Cloud arise
  Little as an Human Hand?
Now it spreads along the Skies,
  Hangs o'er all the thirsty Land!
Lo! the Promise of a Shower
  Drops already from above;
But the Lord shall shortly pour
  All the Spirit of his Love.
(V, 120)

This particular stanza is an excellent illustration of Wesley's ability to weave esoteric biblical history into his hymns so subtly that even Bible scholars may miss the allusion. The first two lines of this stanza contain a very good simile--but it is not original. The story of a power struggle between Elijah and Ahab is recorded in I Kings. After a three year drought the climax occurs on Mount Carmel, where Elijah defeats the prophets of Baal. Following this, Elijah prays for rain. Six times he sends his servant to see if there is any sign in the heavens that his prayer is about to be answered, "And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he [the servant] said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand." (I Kings 8:44) This artful allusion need not be understood in order to appreciate the image in Wesley's hymns, but it is clear that those who know the Bible well gain an extra dimension from this and many other scriptural facts which Wesley intricately weaves into his work. C. Lawrence Ford's statement about Wesley's hymns as a whole applies just as certainly to his use of imagery: "To begin with, they form almost a complete mosaic of Scripture language, much more so than is evident to the cursory observer, or even the ordinary Biblical student. Someone has said that they form a running commentary on the Bible. I would rather say that they would serve as a first-rate test in an examination--and a rather severe test--of a candidate's acquaintance with scripture. Hence, in studying these hymns we are, in a certain sense, studying the Word itself.[11]

Returning to Wesley's use of cloud imagery, we find that with the exception of the two images mentioned above all other uses of this area emphasize the dark or "bad" aspects of the Christian experience. It is, according to Wesley, God's place to sit among the clouds, and he warns sinners:

> Crawl on the earth, nor ever more
> At Satan's instigation soar
> Above the clouds to sit.
> (VII, 23)

The cloud is usually a symbol of trial:

> Around me Clouds of Darkness roll,
> And lab'ring Silence speaks my Moans. . . .
> (I, 50)

Several images are pictures of the clouds that separate man from God, and there is frequently a prayer that the cloud will be removed:

> Come, and by thy Love's revealing
> Dissipate the Clouds beneath.
> (IV, 116)
>
> The scatter'd clouds are fled at last,
> The Rain is gone, the winter past. . . .
> (IX, 364)

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[11] _Proceedings_ of the Wesley Historical Society, II, 175.

Perhaps his best image of this type is the following:

> Be Thou, O Rock of Ages, nigh:
>   So shall each murmuring Thought be gone,
> And Grief, and Fear, and Care shall fly,
>   As Clouds before the Mid-day Sun.
> (I, 128)

Only three images drawn from wind are in any way striking, though the storm imagery in the next section includes this. The first refers to the power of Christ over the wind:

> What kind of man is this,
> Obey'd by winds and seas,
> Whose powerful word controuls
> The tempest in our souls!
> A Man, who built both earth and sky,
> A Man, whose name is God most-high!
> (X, 217)

The effectiveness of this image is achieved by linking the physical wind with the "tempest in our souls." In another short hymn Wesley combines the image of a foundation with that of the wind or storm:

> Let the rain descend, the floud
>   And vehement wind assail,
> Built on an eternal God
>   The house can never fail.
> (X, 206)

In this image, as in the one above, the wind is personified. The final image in this area, and the most effective, is the following:

> Come, Lord, and tame the tiger's force,
>   Arrest the whirlwind in my will,
> Turn back the torrent's rapid course,
>   And bid the headlong sun stand still,
> The rock dissolve, the mountain move,
> And melt my hatred into love.
> (XI, 155)

This is not a typical stanza of Wesley's; it contains only very indirect biblical echoes. However, it is good poetry. The basic concept is that man's soul is filled with violence, and in each line an image picturing a different form of violence is set forth coupled with a prayer that God will soften that particular tendency. The animal imagery in the first line is the most unusual; it contains Wesley's only use of the tiger. The second line, containing his only use of the whirlwind, is just as effective.

Storm imagery in Wesley's hymns is usually related to the sea. I have included most of these images under "Travel" in Appendix D. Several rather general references to the "Countless storms of life" (VIII), the "Storms of Passion" (XIII, 253), and the "tempest in our souls" (X, 217) occur, but these are completely lacking in imagistic force.

The third major category from which Wesley derived his images is that of personal life. Several images which fall in this area are those that are drawn from the home or family. In my total for this group I have not included the word "Father" when applied to God since it no longer retains any force as an image. Wesley does offer some variety by the use of the Latin form in "O Filial Deity" (I, 97), but it would be difficult if not impossible for any hymn writer to use the father-child image as a picture of the God-man relationship effectively. Many times Wesley attempts to do this, but the story of the Prodigal Son has been told so often that any form of it becomes something very close to jargon. If it were not for the familiarity of the Bible story the following stanza might be quite fresh and striking:

> Ready the Father is to own
> And kiss his late-returning Son:

Ready the loving Saviour stands,
And spreads for you his bleeding Hands.
(V, 63)

But there is little force in the stanza; it is an image that has been used too frequently. More effective is Wesley's concept of all men belonging to the "Family of God." "Jesus is our Brother now," (IV, 108) he insists, and in several hymns he uses the earthly family as an image for the metaphysical union of all believers. In the following hymn he stresses this common bond:

Weary of all this wordy Strife,
  These Notions, Forms and Modes and Names,
To Thee, the Way, the Truth, the Life
  Whose Love my simple Heart inflames,
Divinely taught, at last I fly
With Thee, and Thine, to live, and die.

Redeem'd by thine almighty Grace,
  I taste my glorious Liberty,
With open Arms the World embrace,
  But cleave to those who cleave to Thee.
But only in thy Saints delight
Who walk with God in purest white.

The image of embracing the world with open arms is quickly modified by the image of cleaving only to saints. This is, however, about as catholic as Wesley ever gets.

One with the little Flock I rest,
  The Members sound who hold the Head,
The chosen Few, with Pardon blest,
  And by th' anointing Spirit led
Into the Mind that was in Thee,
Into the Depths of Deity.

The image here is from the area of sheepherding, but this is not unusual, for Wesley frequently uses "flock" and "family" interchangably. The next stanza is more specific as to who will be in this heavenly "family":

My Brethren, Friends, and Kinsmen these,
  Who do my heavenly Father's Will,
Who aim at perfect Holiness,
  And all thy Counsels to fulfil,
Athirst to be whate'er Thou art,
And love their God with all their Heart.

The next stanza makes clear the metaphysical nature of this union:

For these, howe'er in Flesh disjoin'd,
  Where'er dispers'd o'er Earth abroad,
Unfeign'd, unbounded Love I find,
  And constant as the Life of God:
Fountain of Life, from thence it sprung,
As pure, as even, and as strong.

Finally, there is the happiness resulting from the knowledge of union in God with others:

Join'd to the hidden Church unknown,
  In this sure Bond of Perfectness,
Obscurely safe, I dwell alone,
  And glory in th' uniting Grace,
To me, to each Believer giv'n,
To all thy Saints in Earth and Heav'n.
(VI, 71-72)

There are, of course, many references to the believer as a child of God, but Wesley does not use the child as an image. He did write hymns for children and about children, but Martha Winburn England has done such good work in this area[12] that I shall not discuss this facet of Wesley's poetry.

Imagery drawn from the area of love and courtship is quite rare. I found only eleven images including five which refer to Christ as the "Bridegroom" and three which mention the Father bestowing a kiss on the Prodigal Son (both drawn from scripture.) In one hymn Christ is

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[12] See Hymns Unbidden: Donne, Blake, Emily Dickenson, and the Hymnographers (New York, 1966).

"The Souls Eternal Lover" (X, 16) and one hymn begins "It is the voice of my Belov'd" (XII, 104). The only "love" poem in my sampling is the following:

> The voice of my Beloved sounds,
> While o'er the mountain-tops he bounds,
> He flies exulting o'er the hills,
> And all my soul with transport fills!
> Gently doth he chide my stay
> 'Rise, my love, and come away.'
> (IX, 363)

This is from the Song of Solomon, of course, but it is one of the milder passages. What would have been the reaction of Wesley's congregation, one might ask, if he had chosen to place the following spicy imagery from that same book into one of his hymns: "This thy stature is like to a palm tree, and thy breasts to clusters of grapes. I said, I will go up to the palm tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof: now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples; And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly . . ." (Song of Solomon 7: 7-9). It is unfair to even consider this, for ministers in our own generation step cautiously around the more pungent imagery of this particular book. Wesley did write several love poems, but the imagery of his hymns almost completely ignores romantic love.

Images drawn from friendship are subsumed under the category of personal life, and these twenty-three images apparently come more naturally to Charles Wesley than those drawn from love. The most common use of this image is Christ as the friend of sinners. It may be said that this was Wesley's favorite word for Christ, for he used it repeatedly:

JESUS the Sinner's Friend proclaim,
JESUS to Sinners still the same.
(I, 92)

Glory be to God on high,
  And Peace on Earth descend;
God comes down: He bows the Sky:
  He shews himself our Friend!
(IV, 108)

The Forfeited Favour of Heaven we find
Restor'd in the Saviour and Friend of Mankind.
(IV, 112)

The Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings,
  Declares Himself our Friend.
(IV, 114)

Make we then a chearful noise,
  Every child of Adam join'd
Share the universal joys,
  Shout the Friend of all mankind.
(IX, 312)

These are only a few of many references to Christ in this role, and this title, "The Friend of Sinners," deserves the title _locus classicus_ in Wesley's work. He intensified this concept by every possible means at his command, for this was the foundation of his theology. God became _man_, and this human being named Jesus Christ could simultaneously be God and the _friend_ of the individual. The anthropomorphic strain in Wesley derives from this, and his imagery of the courtroom is based on the fact that man can now have an advocate who is Divine yet at the same time human--a friend in court. None of the other images which Wesley uses to reveal the nature of Christ is more prevalent; neither the Guide, the Pilot, the Physician, nor the Shepherd have the imagistic force of Christ the Friend. In effect this multiplicity of "human" imagery to which Christ is fitted amounts to a form of dehiscence which is no doubt Wesley's method of inexorably rejecting the Distant

Deity of the Age of Reason.

The 120 images drawn from parts of the body are to a great degree quite conventional. Many of them are anthropomorphic in nature, such as the "Arm of God" or the "Eye of God." The heart is modified by almost every possible adjective--strong, longing, bounding, trembling, fearful, chearful, believing, broken, aching, etc. Six times "the stamm'ring Tongue" occurs, and frequently God is urged to use the "feet" or "hands" of the believer. Few of these are forceful or striking.

Wesley does use the biblical image of the "Body" composed of all believers. In the following hymn the union between man and God is completed by a union among the "members" of the body:

> Christ from whom all Blessings flow,
> Perfecting the Saints below,
> Hear us, who Thy Nature share,
> Who Thy Mustic Body are:
> Join us, in One Spirit join,
> Let us still receive of Thine,
> Still for more on Thee we call,
> Thee, who fillest All in All.
>
> Closer knit to Thee our Head,
> Nourish us, O CHRIST, and feed,
> Let us daily Growth receive,
> More and more in JESUS live:
> JESU! we Thy Members are,
> Cherish us with kindest Care,
> Of Thy Flesh and of Thy Bone:
> Love, forever love Thine own.
>
> Move, and actuate, and guide,
> Diverse Gifts to each divide;
> Plac'd according to thy Will,
> Let us all our Work fulfil,
> Never from our Office move,
> Needful to the Others prove,
> Use the Grace on each bestow'd,
> Temper'd by the Art of God.

Sweetly now we all agree,
Touch'd with softest Sympathy,
Kindly for each other care:
Every Member feels its share:
Wounded by the Grief of One,
All the suffering Members groan;
Honour'd if one Member is
All partake the common Bliss.

Many are we now, and One,
We who JESUS have put on:
There is neither Bond nor Free,
Male nor Female, Lord, in Thee.
Love, like Death, hath all destroy'd,
Render'd all Distinctions void:
Names, and Sects, and Parties fall;
Thou, O CHRIST, art All in All.
(I, 361-362)

In this hymn the fellowship of Christians is created by their common fellowship with their Living Head; the body, while mystic, is a communion or community of the Holy Spirit. This expression of the corporate nature of religion is usually in the form of a "body-head" image. There is a catholic spirit in the last stanza, and Rattenbury remarks concerning this hymn that "the fellowship of Christian men transcends the organized Church and breaks down sectarian barriers. The loyal Anglican, Charles Wesley, had a vision of something greater than any denomination, of a body of men who loved God and each other, which is the true Church. . . ."[13]

Although there are dozens of references to the body of Christ in Wesley's hymns, I have not included them in my tabulation. Wesley sprinkled his work liberally with expressions such as "My soul shall on His Bosom fall," but aside from the rather spectacular (though rare) excursions into the "Blood-and-Wounds" school, there are no striking images in this category. I have included in my tabulation those images which use "bowels" for "heart," such as "Me thy Bowels yearned to see" (I, 96) or "To me, to all Thy Bowels move" (II, 174); however, these are interesting today because of the shift in meaning which has taken place in the language.

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[13] Evangelical Doctrines, p. 332.

Under life processes in Appendix D I have broken the images down into eating, drinking, breathing, birth, and death. Naturally Wesley's Hymns on the Lord's Supper use eating and drinking imagistically. Although it is difficult to believe, there are 114 hymns in this publication, all saying approximately the same thing. I include the following as an example:

JESU, we Thus obey
Thy last and kindest Word,
Here in thine own Appointed Way
We come to meet our Lord;
The Way Thou hast Injoin'd
Thou wilt therein appear:
We come with Confidence to find
Thy special Presence here.

Our Hearts we open wide
To make the Saviour room:
And lo! the Lamb, the Crucified,
The Sinner's Friend is come!
His Presence makes the Feast,
And now our Bosoms feel
The Glory not to be exprest,
The Joy unspeakable.

With pure celestial Bliss
He doth our Spirits chear,
His House of Banquetting is This,
And He hath brought us here:
He doth his Servants feed
With Manna from above,
His Banner over us is spread,
His everlasting Love.

He bids us drink and eat
  Imperishable Food,
He gives his Flesh to be our Meat
  And bids us drink his Blood:
  Whate'er th' Almighty Can
  To pardon'd Sinners give,
The Fulness of our God made Man
  We here with CHRIST receive.
(III, 273-274)

According to Rattenbury "Charles Wesley published in his lifetime hymn-books of varying excellence, but from the theological point of view, notwithstanding the brilliance of the hymns of God's Everlasting Love, none is as rich and deep as the hymns on the Lord's Supper."[14] From a theological point of view this may be true, but from a poetic standpoint this group of hymns is very poor. They are repetitive in both theme and imagery. The same thoughts occur so frequently in the same stock phrases that no matter how noble one feels the content to be, there is a distinct impression that Wesley is swimming in jargon. This may have been unavoidable; perhaps the imagery on this subject was "used up" before Wesley was born. There is no excuse for writing so many of them, but Wesley was never troubled by the fact that he wrote far too much.

In one hymn Wesley managed to use an image of drinking rather well:

Thankful I take the Cup from Thee,
  Prepar'd and mingled by thy Skill:
Tho' bitter to the Taste it be,
  Powerful the wounded Soul to heal.

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[14] _Evangelical Doctrines_, p. 216.

In this case the image is taken from medicine rather than drinking, and in this area Wesley usually managed his imagery much more effectively. The only other image from this category that is striking is the following:

> In Him is bestow'd
> The Spiritual Food,
> The Manna Divine,
> And JESUS's Love is far better than Wine.
> (V, 282)

"Manna Divine" is weak, but the simile is at least a product of Wesley's own mind rather than drawn directly from biblical sources. Frequently his images are drawn directly from the Bible almost word for word, but in other instances he artfully manages some subtle twist which makes the image at least partially his own. In his eating and drinking images, however, he was content for the most part to use direct biblical statements.

Breathing is used five times, but each image is basically the same--the Holy Spirit "breathes" life into man. "That All-informing Breath Thou art/ Who dost Continued Life impart" (IV, 198) and "Thy Creatures all, thy Breath receive" (VI, 21) are typical of this category. Once again, there is nothing particularly new or forceful in this imagery.

Imagery drawn from birth inevitably refers to the "new birth" or man's spiritual re-birth.

> His Spirit answers to the Blood,
> And tells me, I am born of God.
> (II, 324)

Other than this new birth of man we find one image which states that "A Nation will be born in a Day" (VI, 231) and several examples of paradox which stress the essential mystery of God in Christ:

> Him the Angels all ador'd
>   Their Maker and their King:
> Tidings of their Humbled Lord
>   They now to Mortals bring:
> Emptied of his Majesty,
>   Of His dazling Glories shorn,
> Beings source begins to be,
>   And God himself is born!
>   (IV, 108)

Wesley frequently draws upon death for his images. The most frequent image is the state of the "natural" man who is spiritually "dead." In one instance death is vividly personified:

> The recent Horrors still appear:
>   O may they never cease to awe!
> Still be the King of Terrors near,
>   Whom late in all his Pomp I saw.
>
> Torture and Sin prepar'd his Way,
>   And pointed to a yawning Tomb!
> Darkness behind eclips'd the Day,
>   And check'd my forward Hopes of Home.
>   (I, 74-76)

Although Wesley spoke of death many times, he usually chose to present it directly rather than placing it in an image.

Seventy-two times Wesley uses sickness as an image of the spiritual condition of man. The following hymn is drawn from his own experience,[15] and he sees in his physical infirmity a symbolic image of man's spiritual ailments:

> And live I yet by Pow'r Divine?
>   And have I still my Course to run?
> Again brought back in its Decline
>   The Shadow of my parting Sun?

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[15] Thomas Jackson in his Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley (London, 1892), p. 119, claims that these poems were written during March 1738 shortly after Wesley had suffered a serious attack of pleurisy.

Wond'ring I ask, Is This the Breast
  Struggling so late and torn with Pain!
The Eyes that upward look'd for Rest,
  And dropt their weary Lids again!

The recent Horrors still appear:
  O may they never cease to awe!
Still be the King of Terrors near,
  Whom late in all his Pomp I saw.

Torture and Sin prepar'd his Way,
  And pointed to a yawning Tomb!
Darkness behind eclips'd the Day,
  And check'd my forward Hopes of Home.

My feeble Flesh refus'd to bear
  Its strong redoubled Agonies:
When Mercy heard my speechless Pray'r,
  And saw me faintly gasp for Ease.

JESUS to my Deliv'rance flew,
  Where sunk in mortal Pangs I lay:
Pale Death his Ancient Conqu'ror knew,
  And trembled, and ungrasp'd his Prey!

The Fever turn'd its backward Course,
  Arrested by Almighty Pow'r;
Sudden expir'd its Fiery Force,
  And Anguish gnaw'd my Side no more.

God of my Life, what just Return
  Can sinful Dust and Ashes give?
I only Live my Sin to mourn,
  To love my God I only live.

To Thee, benign and saving Pow'r
  I consecrate my lengthen'd Days;
While mark'd with Blessings, ev'ry Hour
  Shall speak thy co-extended Praise.

How shall I teach the World to love,
  Unchang'd myself, unloos'd my Tongue?
Give me the Pow'r of Faith to prove,
  And Mercy shall be all my Song.

Be All my Added Life employ'd
  Thy Image in my Soul to see:
Fill with Thyself the Mighty Void;
  Enlarge my Heart to compass Thee.

O give me, Saviour, give me more!
  Thy Mercies to my Soul reveal:
Alas! I see their endless Store,
  Yet O! I cannot, cannot feel!

The Blessing of thy Love bestow:
  For this my Cries shall never fail;
Wrestling I will not let Thee go,
  I will not, till my Suit prevail.

I'll weary Thee with my Complaint;
  Here at thy Feet for ever lie,
With longing sick, with groaning faint:
  O give me Love, or else I die!

Without this best, divinest Grace
  'Tis Death, 'tis worse than Death to live;
'Tis Hell to want thy Blissful Face,
  And Saints in Thee their Heav'n receive.

Come then, my Hope, my Life, my Lord,
  And fix in me thy lasting Home!
Be mindful of thy gracious Word,
  Thou with thy promis'd Father, come!

Prepare, and then possess my Heart,
  O take me, seize me from above;
Thee do I love, for God Thou art:
  Thee Do I feel, for God is Love!
(I, 74-76)

Physical illness and spiritual disturbance blend in this hymn in a manner quite typical of Wesley. The first five stanzas speak of the horror of sickness and death on a purely physical plane, and stanzas five and six refer to the healing of the body by the power of Christ. Wesley then devotes the rest of the hymn to the spiritual life, insisting first that the physical healing has "unloos'd" his tongue and that the rest of life must be devoted to Christ. The image of the spiritual healing is evident when stanza seven speaks of physical healing:

The Fever turn'd its backward Course,

Arrested by Almighty Pow'r;
Sudden expir'd its Fiery Force,
And Anguish gnaw'd my Side no more.

And when we turn to the most famous lines which Wesley wrote on his spiritual "healing" we find a structure which is almost identical:

Sudden expir'd the legal Strife,
'Twas then I ceas'd to grieve,
My Second, Real, Living Life
I then began to live.
(I, 299)

The sudden deliverance from pain in the body is in Wesley's hymns the most vivid picture of the conversion experience. Sickness itself is the symbol which he uses to stress the concept of original sin, and in hymn after hymn we find this type of imagery:

On us, O Christ, thy mission prove,
Thy full authority to heal,
The blindness of our hearts remove,
The lameness of our feeble will,
Open our faith's obedient ear,
Our filthy, leprous nature cure,
Call us out of the sepulchre,
And preach Perfection to the poor.
(V, 123)

Wesley carries this imagery one step further in the following stanza. Some individuals are so "sick" with sin that they are beyond the help of divine healing:

He offer'd them sufficient light
Which when they could, but would not see,
He left them in their nature's night,
Their unbelief's obscurity:
He offer'd them his soft'ning grace,
And when its power they scorn'd to feel
Forsook the sick self-harden'd race
Who would not suffer him to heal.
(XI, 495-496)

Another doctrine which Wesley stressed through sickness imagery was that of assurance. This theological battle raged all during his lifetime, and in the following stanza Wesley meets the arguments of those who refused to believe that man could be assured of his salvation by the method of reductio ad absurdum:

The gasping Patient lies
  In Agony of Pain!
But see Him light arise
  Restor'd to Health again!
And doth He certainly receive,
  The Knowledge of his Cure!
And am I Conscious that I live?
  And is my Pardon sure?

A Wretch for Years consign'd
  To hopeless Misery,
The happy Change must find,
  From all his Pain set free:
And must not I the Difference know
  Of Joy, and anxious Grief,
Of Grace, and Sin, of Weal, and Woe,
  Of Faith, and Unbelief?
(V, 365)

If a man, Wesley asks, recognizes that his body is healed, cannot he recognize the healing in his spirit? Wesley's opponents probably lost no time pointing out that this is a false analogy, but the imagery is quite powerful nonetheless.

The "healing" power of Christ is the subject of many of Wesley's images in this area. Scattered throughout his hymns are phrases such as "Purge and wash out all my guilt" (IX, 275), "Healing in his wings" (I, 183), "All our sickness heal" (III, 228), and "the Medicine of my broken heart" (V, 50). One of the most striking examples of Wesley's use of this image is in the following hymn:

When the gospel of grace
Is proclaim'd in our days,
From all places around
What a multitude flock to the life-giving sound!
  To the Church they repair;
  For Jesus is there
  In his virtue to heal,
And ready his love in their hearts to reveal.

The desperate crowd
With infirmites bow'd,
Sick of every sin,
And vex'd with a legion of spirits unclean
  The Physician attend,
  And his goodness commend,
  Who his patients relieves,
And a pardon to all the incurable gives.
(XII, 186-187)

This image often deviates into the spectacular Moravian style:

Brim full of all Evil, & void of all good,
Heavy laden with Guilt, & o'erwhelm'd with the Load,
At Jesus's Feet a mere Sinner I lie,
A Sinner at Jesus's Feet cannot die.

Sick of every Disease that a Spirit can know,
I out of myself for a Remedy go;
The Remedy gushes from Jesus's Side,
And my Soul shall be heal'd when the Blood is Applied.
(XIII, 245)

One final image is worthy of note:

Stung by the Scorpion Sin
  My poor expiring Soul
The balmy Sound drinks in,
  And is at once made whole,
See there my Lord upon the Tree!
I hear, I feel he died for me.
(III, 72)

These images of sickness are usually quite effective in Wesley's work; they are well-suited to his purpose because to Wesley the healing of the body (usually in a manner almost miraculous) was a natural metaphor for the mystic experience of conversion. He leans heavily, of course, on the healing ministry of Christ, and this is perfectly legitimate for the writer of hymns.

The fourth major category which I have tabulated in Appendix D includes those images which are drawn from daily life. I have broken them up into five smaller groups--employment, commerce, sport, travel, and home life.

Of those sixty-two images which are drawn from employment, seven are general with no specific area being attached to the word "work." Usually, however, the tools or practices of various trades or occupations are employed as images to teach some facet of scriptural truth. In the following stanza, for example, the image of sowing is utilized to stress the importance of serving God:

Who Seed immortal bears,
And wets his Path with Tears,
Doubtless He shall soon return,
Bring his Sheaves with vast Increase,
Fully of the Spirit born,
Perfected in Holiness.
(VIII, 243)

Wesley however, does not draw frequently on images drawn from agriculture; the only other images refer to the service of God as a "yoke."

Naturally the hymns of Wesley contain images drawn from sheep herding:

Thou the Good Shepherd art,
From Thee I ne'er shall part:
Thou my Keeper and my Guide,
Make me still thy Tender Care,
Gently lead me by thy Side,
Sweetly in thy Bosom bear.
(I, 98)

Frequently Wesley manages to mix his metaphors, and he is particularly inclined to this when speaking of sheep:

And lead them to thine open Side,
The Sheep, for whom their Shepherd died.
(V, 105)

None of these images is particularly forceful, for as with the Prodigal Son image it is practically impossible to arrive at originality. The following stanza is probably Wesley's best effort in this category:

Thou Shepherd of _Israel_, and mine,
  The joy and desire of my heart,
For closer communion I pine,
  I long to reside where thou art;
The Pasture I languish to find
  Where all who their Shepherd obey,
Are fed, on thy bosom reclin'd,
  Are skreened from the heat of the day.
(X, 362)

There are only two images from the quarry, both most interesting, especially when the background is understood. The stanza is a prayer for God to arouse the stony hearts of men:

Come, O Thou all-victorious Lord,
  Thy power to us make known;
Strike with the hammer of Thy word,
  And break these hearts of stone,
(V, 123)

Writing of this hymn, James Dale tells us that it "was written when, in June 1746, Charles Wesley was finding great difficulty in converting the uncouth, unawakened people of the Isle of Portland of their need of salvation. Thoughts concerning the quarrying of stone in the Isle, the hardness of the Islanders' hearts, and a favorite verse of Scripture fuse together to create an arresting opening stanza. On 6th June Wesley preached three times without making any apparent impression, and was presumably then moved to write the hymn; there were encouraging signs of awakening when he preached again two days later, and on 9th June 'The power and blessing came'. Using the metaphor of the hymn he writes: 'The rocks were broken in pieces, and melted into tears on every side'."[16] Frank Baker in _Representative Hymns_ has included another hymn with practically the same image:

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[16] "Some Echoes of Charles Wesley's Hymns in his Journal," _London Quarterly and Holborn Review_, CLXXX (1959), 341.

The Opposers admire
The Hammer and Fire,
Which all things o'ercomes,
And breaks the hard Rocks, and the Mountains consumes.
With quiet Amaze
They listen and gaze,
And their Weapons resign,
Constrained to acknowledge--The Work is Divine![17]

From mining Wesley draws only a single image; speaking of wisdom he insists, "Better is she than richest mines" (IV, 234); however, there are three images drawn from the refining of ore, all taken from the Bible.

Happy Soul, as Silver tried,
Silver seven Times purified,
Love hath broke the Rock of Stone,
All thy Hardness melted down.
(IV, 317)

Our love from Earthly Dross refine,
(V, 418)

Try me then, and try me still
In the furnace of distress,
By my own, and others ill,
By the hidings of thy face;
Yet will I the promise hold
Which JESUS to my heart hath told,
I shall at last come forth as gold.
(IX, 259)

Closely related to these images are the two images which picture the Christian's life as being "wrought out of Gold" (V, 412) and another which states that "Christ hast wrought out our salvation" (III, 346).

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[17] Baker points out that this hymn was written after "a series of heart-warming gatherings in various centres, with a computed 12,000 gathered in Gwenap Pit on Sunday evening, 10th. August, to whom Charles Wesley preached for nearly two hours with great effect" (Representative Hymns, p. 93).

Sailing was a favorite source of imagery for Wesley. He speaks of the lost as "A Hellish Crew" (I, 299); the believer must be "fitted out for Heaven" (VI, 233) and "stand the evening Watch" (III, 340). He uses the naval "press" in one stanza:

> Listed into the Cause of Sin,
> Why sould a Good be Evil?
> Musick, alas! too long has been
> Prest to obey the Devil.
> (II, 253)

There are many other images of sailing, but I have included most of them under travel imagery.

Three times imagery drawn from the vineyard or winemaking occurs such as "Jesus drinks the Bitter Cup: the Winepress treads alone" (III, 229) and "The Vineyard of the Lord/ Before His Labourers lies" (V, 402); Wesley uses images drawn from scripture once again.

One other image in this area is unusual. Twice he refers to the unbeliever in terms of unemployment:

> I died to save them from All Sin,
> And forced the Vagrants to come in.
> (IV, 277)

And:

> Ye vagrant Souls, on You I call,
> (IV, 277)

In this particular case the imagery is quite effective. The hymn is an adaptation of the parable of the Great Supper, and those invited refuse to come. This image captures the spirit of their sluggishness, their lack of spiritual death-in-life, and their utter lack of purpose.

Less significant than images drawn from employment are those which are derived from commerce. There are 156 images drawn from this area, but it is important to understand that most of these are scriptural. It is not difficult to classify these images, but it is almost impossible to find any fresh or striking examples in Wesley's work. The believer is "redeemed," his "debt is paid," he has "treasure" in heaven. The unbeliever is a "slave" to sin, and he will receive "the wages of death." Wesley uses these words and phrases so automatically that almost any hymn will yield some image drawn from economics or commerce. Christ or the Holy Spirit is the "Pledge," or the "Seal," or the "Earnest"; these images may have been quite forceful once, but Wesley relies on them far too much. The truth of the matter is that in this particular area Wesley was content to use conventional imagery; the large number of images drawn from this area adds nothing to his stature as a poet.

Twenty-three images are listed which are derived from sports. Christ is once referred to as "A dying Champion" (III, 350). One image is from fishing: "The gilded Baits of Worldly Love" (V, 50) and one from hunting: "I tread on Death and Snares" (I, 123). "And lingering stood, 'till Sin should find/ And seize its willing Prey" (IV, 445) is probably a reference to hunting (though it could refer to falconry as well). Five times Wesley speaks of the "Prize" which the believer will win, and ten times he mentions that life is "a race to be run." I have included dancing under this category, but there are only trite images such as "My heart it doth dance to the sound of thy voice" (V, 24). If Caroline Spurgeon were writing this thesis, she would, no doubt, conclude that Wesley was not a sportsman; however, my only conclusion is that Wesley did not use images drawn from sports.

The last group of images in this division is by far the most important; in fact, it may well be that the imagery which Wesley drew from traveling constitutes his best poetic efforts. Basically there are two types of travel which are significant to this study--walking and sailing.

Life is a pilgrimage in Wesley's hymns. He saw life, certainly, as being a gloomy existence compared to that heavenly life which awaits the believer, and his imagery frequently reveals that the journey is dangerous and difficult; however, in every case of this rather gloomy picture he points out that the "end of journey" would be quite happy for the believer:

> Come on, my Partners in Distress,
> My Comrades tho' the Wilderness,
>   Who still your Bodies feel,
> A while forget your Griefs, and Fears,
> And look beyond the Vale of Tears
>   To that Celestial Hill.
>
> Beyond the Bounds of Time, and Space,
> Look forward to that happy Place,
>   The Saints secure Abode,
> On Faith's strong Eagle Pinions rise,
> And force your Passage to the Skies,
>   And scale the Mount of God.
>
> Who suffer for our Master here,
> We shall before his Face appear,
>   And by his Side sit down:
> To Patient Faith the Prize is sure,
> And all, that to the end endure
>   The Cross, shall wear the Crown.
> (V, 168-169)

The "pilgrimage" of man is shown three times in images which are drawn from the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the desert. The best of these is the following:

Thy Presence Divine
Doth inwardly shine,
The *Schechinah* rests
On all our Assemblies, and glows in our Breasts.
By Day and by Night
The Pillar of Light
Our Steps shall attend.
And convoy us safe to our Prosperous End.

Then let us rejoice
In heart and in Voice,
Our Leader pursue,
And shout as we travel the Wilderness thro';
With the Spirit remove
To Sion above,
Triumphant arise
And walk in our God, 'till we fly to the Skies.
(IV, 204)

As the last line indicates, Wesley tends to become airborne toward the end of the journey. In six hymns which speak of the pilgrimage of life, the last stanza pictures the pilgrims suddenly flying instead of walking:

Ministerial Spirits come,
Spread your golden Wings for me,
Waft me to my Heavenly Home,
Land me in Eternity,
Bear me to my Glorious Rest,
Take me to my Saviour's Breast.
(III, 168)

The character or nature of man is strongly stressed as being "homeless" without God. "Take the weary Wanderer home" (I, 97) is the frequent plea, or "Every weary wandering Spirit/Guide into thy Perfect Peace" (IV, 117). But if man is a wanderer in the "Desart of life" (III, 168), there is the figure of the Guide. Sixteen times Wesley uses the image of a guide leading man's steps aright. Sometimes this image refers to the Holy Spirit:

Thou art My Inward Guide,
I ask no Help beside:

Arm of God, to Thee I call,
  Weak as Helpless Infancy!
Weak I am--yet cannot fall
  Stay'd by Faith, and led by Thee!
(I, 100)

And again:

Then let us turn no more aside,
  But use the Light Himself imparts,
His Spirit is our surest Guide,
  His Spirit glimmering in our Hearts.
(IV, 123)

And:

Our Heavenly Guide
With us shall abide;
His Comforts impart,
And set up his Kingdom of Love in the Heart . . .
(IV, 203)

At other times the "guide" becomes a military leader:

Captain of Israel's host, and Guide
  Of All who seek that land above,
Beneath thy shadow we abide,
  The cloud of thy protecting love,
Our strength thy grace, our rule thy word,
Our end, the glory of the Lord.

By thine unerring Spirit led,
  We shall not in the desart stray,
The light of man's direction need,
  Or miss our providential way,
As far from danger as from fear,
While Love, Almighty Love, is near.
(IX, 43)

The hymn above is typical of Wesley's imagery using the figure of the guide, for he mixes this image with other images drawn from nature, from military life, and from scripture.

Travel by sea is Wesley's most effective source of images in many respects. The "voyage of life" is rough and dangerous:

See a rough draught of human life!
  All is one continued strife,
    Fatigue, & misery.
A night of perilous distress,
Without relief, without success,
    We tempt the stormy sea.

But when the dreary hour is o're,
  Jesus on the happy shore
    Shall satisfy our need,
Shall bless us with the sight of God,
And with imperishable food
    Our raptured Spirits feed.
(XII, 115)

Here again there is an image added to the voyage imagery--and probably the image drawn from eating weakens the hymn. Far better from the standpoint of imagery is the following short hymn:

Let the winds blow, and billows roll,
Hope is the anchor of the soul:
But can I by so slight a tie,
An unseen hope, on God rely?
Stedfast and sure it cannot fail,
It enters deep within the veil,
It fastens on a land unknown,
And moors me to my Father's throne!
(XIII, 135)

The imagery in this short stanza is marred by the throwing in of the scriptural image of the veil, but aside from that flaw, it is perfect. It is not "preachy," for Wesley allows the reader to draw his own conclusions on the nature of faith.

Frequently Wesley emphasized the power of Christ by using the image of a storm at sea:

Jesus, to Thee I would look up,
  Tost in a Storm of Passion,
Thou art the Anchor of my Hope,
  Thou art my strong Salvation:
Pity and save a Soul, distrest
  Till I the Port recover;
O that I in thy Wounds might rest,
  Till all the Storm is over.

Great is the Storm that works within,
  Jesus his Grace is greater:
Thou art above the Power of Sin,
  Thou art the God of Nature:
Speak: & at thy supream Command
  Trouble and Sin shall leave me.
Stir up thy Strength, stretch out thine Hand,
  Say 'It is I', and save me.

Give me this Hour thy Help to find,
  Shew me thy great Salvation,
So will I call on All Mankind
  In loving Admiration,
O what a Man, a God, is This!
  Nature is still'd before Him,
Lo! at his Word the Winds and Seas
  Suddenly calm'd adore Him.
(XIII, 253)

This image of sailing is a recurrent image in Wesley's hymns which four times takes the form of the Church as a ship. In the following stanza the departed Christian reaches his goal, or haven, on a ship:

There all the Ship's Company meet,
  Who sail'd with the Saviour beneath,
With Shouting each other they greet,
  And triumph o'er Trouble and Death:
The Voyage of Life's at an End,
  The mortal Affliction is past,
The Age that in Heaven they spend
  For ever and ever shall last.
(V, 190)

Dr. Frank Baker has remarked that both the Wesleys called the Church "the old ship,"[18] and Charles uses the phrase in a letter written on 29 October 1756 to the Methodists at Leeds, which he incorporates in the Journal. Endeavouring to dissuade them from leaving the Church of England, he says: "Continue in the old ship. Jesus hath a favour for our Church; and is wonderfully visiting and reviving his work in her."[19]

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[18] Charles Wesley as Revealed by His Letters (London, 1947), p. 91.

[19] Representative Hymns, p. 97.

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul" is considered by many Wesley's finest composition. There have been several rather futile attempts to "improve" the hymn by emendation, but, as J. B. Reeves insists flatly, "Wesley knew the sea and knew what he was saying."[20] That this hymn is one of the greatest ever written is undeniable; however, there is one aspect of the imagery which appears to me quite weak. I quote the hymn in its entirety in order to point out this weakness:

JESU, Lover of my Soul,
  Let me to Thy Bosom fly,
While the nearer Waters roll,
  While the Tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
  Till the Storm of Life is past:
Safe into the Haven guide;
  O receive my Soul at last.

Other Refuge have I none,
  Hangs my helpless Soul on Thee:
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,
  Still support, and comfort me.
All my Trust on Thee is stay'd;
  All my Help from Thee I bring;
Cover my defenceless Head,
  With the Shadow of thy Wing.

Wilt Thou not regard my Call?
  Wilt Thou not accept my Prayer?
Lo. I sink, I faint, I fall--
  Lo! on Thee I cast my Care:
Reach me out Thy gracious Hand!
  While I of Thy Strength receive,
Hoping against Hope I stand
  Dying, and behold I live!

Thou, O CHRIST, art all I want,
  More than all in Thee I find:
Raise the Fallen, chear the Faint,
  Heal the Sick, and lead the Blind,

---

[20] *The Hymn as Literature* (New York, 1946) p. 108.

Just and Holy is Thy Name,
  I am all unrighteousness,
False and full of Sin I am,
  Thou art full of Truth and Grace.

Plenteous Grace with Thee is found,
  Grace to cover all my Sin:
Let the healing Streams abound,
  Make, and keep me pure within:
Thou of Life the Fountain art:
  Freely let me take of Thee,
Spring Thou up within my Heart,
  Rise to all Eternity!
(I, 259-260)

The title which Charles Wesley gave this hymn was "In Time of Prayer and Temptation," later changed to "In Temptation." The figure is not one which refers to the "lost" man who must be converted; rather it is the cry of the believer who must have divine aid to resist temptation. Wesley uses the image of a storm which is about to drown the victim in stanza one, but he shifts to images drawn from other areas of life to illustrate his point. There is nothing wrong with this, and those who have criticised the hymn on the basis that it was "cluttered" with images fail to understand Wesley's effective use of montage to present dramatically a concept or problem. However, the imagery of the last stanza is that of a fountain; the thirsty soul cries out for "streams" to "spring up" within his heart. This is quite disconcerting when one notices that in stanza one the same "victim" is being innundated, drowned by too much water. In other words, stanza one uses imagery which reflects the need for salvation from water, but the final stanza clashes with this by throwing in an image which adds to the flood.

Images which are derived from home life are rare in Wesley's hymns. Eight times there are references to houses, but the only two worthy of note refer to the earth as the "House of Bondage" (IV, 50) and the "House of Death" (VI, 332). The remainder use the familiar image of "The House of God" to refer to the family of believers on earth.

Cleaning images are common, but most of these images are rather general, such as "Clean my Soul,/ and fit me for the Skies" (XI, 23). Those eight images which use washing are all alike in that they compare the cleansing of the soul from sin to bathing. Wesley uses both water and blood as the cleansing agents, and frequently he allows other figures of speech to flow into these images, such as in the following:

> Ready the Spirit of his Love,
> Just now the Stony to remove;
> T'apply and witness with the Blood,
> And wash and seal the Sons of God.
> (V, 64)

Or in this stanza:

> He breaks the Power of cancell'd Sin,
>   He sets the Prisoner free:
> His Blood can make the Foulest clean;
>   His Blood avail'd for me.
> (I, 299)

In another stanza he uses sleep and the ocean in conjunction with washing:

> Awake from guilty Nature's Sleep,
>   And CHRIST shall give you Light,
> Cast all your Sins into the Deep,
>   And wash the Ethiop white.
> (I, 300)

In only one point is Wesley's imagery of blood-washing different from other hymn writers; he usually connects the "cleansing" with feeling. Seven times he does this by insisting that the individual "feel" the process. The following stanza is a typical example of this tendency:

For this alone I breathe
To spread the Gospel-sound,
Glad Tidings of Thy Death
To all the Nations round;
Who All may feel thy Blood applied,
Since all are freely justified.
(III, 72)

Cooking is used only a few times, for though Wesley frequently used eating and drinking as images, he did not think in terms of preparation of the food. His images are in terms of a feast or supper:

Ah tell us no more
The Spirit and Power
Of JESUS our God
Is not to be found in this Life-giving Food!

Did JESUS ordain
His supper in vain,
And furnish a Feast
For none but his earliest Servants to taste?
(III, 282)

Here the imagery is concerned with food and one assumes that it was prepared, but Wesley to my knowledge never used any image except that of leaven (taken directly from the Bible) in the area of cooking.

The use of the servant image to refer to believers occurs twenty times, but none of these images is developed or is in any way striking.

Eleven times Wesley uses the image of a vessel, and several of these are quite effective. In the following stanza the submission of a believer to the will of God is portrayed by use of vessel imagery:

The Gift which He on One bestows
We all delight to prove,
The Grace thro' every Vessel flows
In purest Streams of Love.
(IV, 253)

Three times Wesley uses this image when referring to the incarnation of Christ:

> Lo! He lays his Glory by,
> Emptied of his Majesty!
> See the God who all Things made,
> Humbly in a Manger laid.
> (IV, 117)

The image here is that of dress, for in the first line there is a visual image of the putting aside of clothing, but the second line cannot be an extension of this, for one is not "emptied" when one is undressed; the image must logically refer to a vessel which is emptied of its contents. Usually, however, it is the believer who is to be "fill'd," though in one instance the unbeliever is said to be "Brim full of all Evil, & void of all good" (XIII, 245). In one line God is asked to "Prepare the vessel of thy Grace" (V, 135), while in another the prayer asks "Fill with Thyself the Mighty Void;/ Enlarge my Heart to compass Thee!" (I, 75). In three instances the humility of the individual is stressed, for the reference is to a mean or unworthy vessel.

The rest of Wesley's images are quite ordinary. He uses the "door" to heaven, the "key" to life, the "room" in man's heart, the "footstool" of God, and other rather shop-worn imagery.

The sixth category which I have listed in Appendix D, images drawn from art, contains only sixty-three items. The most important facet of Wesley's use of this area that my study disclosed was that he practically ignored the entire field. A study which leaned toward Caroline Spurgeon's method would draw the conclusion that Wesley was unaware of this area, but such is not the case. He had the advantages of the best education his age could provide--thirteen years at Westminster School under his elder brother Samuel and nine years at Oxford. The only explanation which seems feasible lies in the fact that few men have led lives as active as Charles Wesley. This activity, however, was channeled into the one cause which he felt was worthy of his complete devotion--the preaching of the gospel. The fact that most of his ministry was spent among the poor augmented his tendency to write in terms which the common man would understand, and it is useless to speculate on the direction his imagery might have taken if he had been the pastor of a church with an educated and wealthy congregation. The fact is that his imagery is drawn from areas other than the arts, but this does not necessarily mean that the man himself was lacking in culture.

His use of music as a source of imagery is a disappointment. Wesley loved music, but for some reason he did not display originality in imagery drawn from this area. The following stanzas are typical of his imagery with music:

JESUS, harmonious Name!
  It charms the Hosts above;
They evermore proclaim,
  And wonder at His Love?
'Tis all their Happiness to gaze,
'Tis Heaven to see Our JESU's Face.

His Name the Sinner hears,
  And is from Sin set free;
'Tis Musick in his Hears,
  'Tis Life and Victory;
New Songs do now his Lips employ,
And Dances his glad Heart for Joy.
(III, 71)

Ye heavenly Choir,
  Assist me to sing,
And strike the soft Lyre,
  And Honour our King:
His mighty Salvation
  Demands all our Praise,
Our best Adoration,
  And loftiest Lays.
                    (IV, 107)

Will his Majesty disdain
The poor Shepherd's simple Strain?
No; for Israel's Shepherd He
Loves their artless Melody.

He will not refuse the Song
Of the stammering Infant's Tongue,
Babes He hears humanely mild,
Once Himself a little Child.
                    (IV, 117)

Even Wesley's most devout admirers would hesitate to claim much merit for these lines, and the rest of his lines involving music are no better.

Concerning the rest of the arts and Wesley's use of images drawn from them there is little to be said. He could use the expression "Mould as Thou wilt the Passive Clay" (VI, 11) with reference to the sculpturer's art, and "Gild the skies" (IV, 312) is as well as he ever does with painting. Architecture is treated with such phrases as "Jesus, the Corner Stone," and the rest of the fine arts are ignored completely.

All other images I have placed under the category of miscellaneous. The majority of these are taken from Jewish worship, but since they are strictly biblical images there is little point in an extended discussion of this group.

The scope of Wesley's use of imagery is vast; few areas are left untouched, and in most of them he showed flashes of true poetic fire. His best images are drawn from crime, from nature, and from the sea. Some of these images are poor, of course, and as I have pointed out repeatedly, many of them are lifted almost word for word from the Bible. This practice was, to Wesley, not a defect, but an asset. On the whole, it seems clear that Wesley accomplished what he set out to do; that is, he wrote hymns which would serve as an instrument of teaching--but he did more than that, for frequently his poetic spirit overcame the didactic impulse and brought forth poetry in the purest sense.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The question of influence on any literary work is always difficult, and in the case of Charles Wesley's hymns the problem is more perplexing than with other hymn writers, for his work is more complex. This is patently true concerning metre; Watts and Cowper wrote almost all of their hymns in three metres, while Wesley employed over one hundred different forms. There is a counterpoint of literary allusion in his hymns that is missing from the hymns of other men. It is almost inevitable that the phraseology of a man's favourite authors should find its way, sometimes unnoticed, into his own writings, though the results in the case of Charles Wesley are occasionally quite surprising to the modern reader. Little work has been done with literary allusions in Wesley's hymns. Dr. Bett has garnered echoes of several English poets in his hymns, particularly Shakespeare, Milton, Herbert, Dryden, Pope, Prior, and Young.[1] Frank Baker points out that "love Divine, all Loves excelling" follows the metre as well as echoes the opening words of Dryden's "Fairest Isle" and that "Jesu, Lover of my Soul" is indebted to Prior's _Solomon_ for the phrase "the nearer waters roll."[2]

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[1] _The Hymns of Methodism_, pp. 124-129.

[2] _Representative Hymns_, p. xxiii. Baker also states that _Solomon_ was a favourite poem with both Wesleys. It occupies 100 pages of John Wesley's _Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems_ (I, 91-192), and Charles Wesley urged his daughter Sally to memorize it completely!

Wesley's imagery has received even less attention than metre or literary allusion. This is unfortunate, for another dimension was added to hymnody through the innovations which he brought to the field. To conclude this study, I would like to suggest two significant factors which were influential in Wesley's use of the image in his hymns, and to compare his imagery with that of Watts and Cowper.

The religious poets of the seventeenth century, it seems to me, influenced the art of Wesley to some degree. The poetry of the metaphysicals was eclipsed during the eighteenth century; Donne, Crashaw, and Herbert were ignored for the most part, dismissed from the Restoration until the end of the nineteenth century as crabbed, eccentric, and chaotic. "The metaphysical poets," Dr. Johnson insisted in his Life of Cowley, "were men of learning, and to show their learning was their whole endeavor." From about 1920 on, however, a vast admiration has developed for this group.

John Wesley's admiration for this group, or some of them, has been discussed in Martha Winburn England's excellent book, Hymns Unbidden.[11] This admiration for Donne and Herbert on the part of John is the tie which links the poetry of this school to the hymns of Charles. John included several poems from The Temple in his Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems (1744), and in 1733 he published Select Parts of Mr. Herbert's Sacred Poems, a collection of twenty-three poems from The Temple. John not only anthologized Herbert's poems, but adapted them for congregational singing. In the 1739 edition of Hymns and Sacred Poems no fewer than forty-two out of 138 pieces were adaptations from Herbert; all were designated as being "From Herbert," and in almost every case they retained their original titles. These poems were modified greatly, of course, but an ever-widening circle of readers was introduced to Herbert's poetry.

John Wesley's attempt to popularize Herbert with the Methodist congregations had no lasting success, for when a canon of Methodist hymns was established in 1780 with the publication of *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*, which has remained (with additions) the standard Methodist Hymnal, only one of Wesley's adaptations from *The Temple* was retained.

The most lasting result of John's admiration for the metaphysicals is, it seems to me, the effect that their poetry had on the imagery and texture of his brother's hymns. It seems inconceivable that the younger brother could remain ignorant of a body of work that so influenced the elder, but in all probability whatever influence Herbert and Donne had on his hymns was indirect. In other words, Charles Wesley was *not* a metaphysical poet in the same sense of the word that the seventeenth-century religious poets were, but several characteristics of their work appear frequently in his compositions (in a manner not found in other hymn writers).

Wesley's hymns do not, of course, maintain the sharp and unexpected pause, stress, and tempo which one encounters frequently in the metaphysicals (the limitations of the congregation forbid this), but quite often we find in Wesley's hymns vivid, abrupt speech patterns such as Donne's "For Godsake hold your tongue, and let me love" ("The Canonization") or "I long to talke with some old lovers ghost" ("Loves Deitie"). This direct, vivid manner of speech is indeed abrupt, but it is also dramatic. It is also missing from the hymns of Charles Wesley's contemporaries. In the following examples we find this type of vivid speech pattern working its way down into the very capillaries of his hymns:

And can it be, that I should gain
  An Int'rest in the Saviour's Blood!
(I, 105)

Come, Sinners, to the Gospel-Feast,
Let every Soul be JESU's Guest,
You need not One be left behind,
For GOD hath bidden all Mankind.
(IV, 274)

O that I was as heretofore
  When first sent forth in JESU's Name;
I rush'd thro' every open Door,
  And cried to All, 'Behold the Lamb!'
(V, 105)

And are we yet alive,
And see Each other's Face?
(V, 466)

I'll weary Thee with my Complaint;
  Here at thy Feet for ever lie,
With longing sick, with groaning faint:
  O give me Love, or else I die!
(I, 76)

This dramatic element in Wesley's hymns may or may not have been a result of his reading of the metaphysicals, but the technique is the same--the statement suddenly "jumps" at the reader in a way that the hymns of Cowper or Watts do not.

The far-reach allusions to physiology, astronomy, and alchemy in the poetry of the metaphysicals--the conceits--are not to be found in Wesley. They would have been out of place to say the least. But the poetry of Donne and Herbert abounds with startling imagery (usually associating incongruous objects). The imagery of Wesley does not wrench the meanings of words, of course, but the most obvious difference between Wesley's imagery and that of other hymn writers is that he frequently inserts a figure that strikes home with great force. The explosive power of the imagery in the following stanza is a good example:

> Jesus drinks the bitter Cup;
>   The Wine-press treads alone,
> Tears the Graves and Mountains up
>   By his expiring Groan:
> Lo! the Powers of Heaven He shakes;
>   Nature in Convulsions lies,
> Earth's profoundest Centre quakes,
>   The great Jehovah dies!

The first two lines are drawn from the Bible, but "Tears the Graves and Mountains up/ By his expiring Groan" is typical of Wesley's ability to provide imagery which serves as counterpoint to scriptural language; the "silent" images in the first two lines contrast strikingly with the "sound" of the next two.

The following stanza employs striking imagery such as one simply cannot find in most hymn writers:

> Our life is a Dream,
> Our times as a stream
> Glides swiftly away,
> And the fugitive moment refuses to stay,
> The Arrow is flown,
> The moment is gone,
> The millennial year
> Rushes on to our view, and Eternity's here!
> (VI, 14)

There is an urgency, a sense of flashing time in the imagery which causes time to sweep before the mind in a rushing panorama. This vivid imagery is quite common in many secular poets, but within a hymn it strikes one as being "poetic." The sense of darkness is effectively captured in the following stanza:

> Absent from Thee, my exil'd Soul
>   Deep in a Fleshly Dungeon groans;
> Around me Clouds of Darkness roll,
>   And lab'ring Silence speaks my Moans.
>   (I, 50)

And in the following stanza Wesley employs scriptural language to arrive at one of the most striking images in his canon:

> Thou wouldst not let me go away;
>   Still Thou forcest me to stay.
>   O might the Secret Power
>   Which will not with its Captive part,
>   Nail to the Posts of Mercy's Door
>   My poor unstable Heart.
>   (III, 272)

This image--nailing the heart to a post--is very close to the method of Donne and Herbert, and throughout the hymns of Wesley we find this ability to create (usually employing biblical allusions) the image that has at once the capacity to strike the reader with some force and at the same time bring an echo from the Bible to mind.

One final characteristic which Wesley shares with the metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century (or some of them) is a sense of religious melancholy. Donne and Herbert both wrote poetry which contains a dark strain; they were able to see clearly the futility of human life, and though their poetry is at times full of joy and hope, there is interwoven with this brilliance the undertone of despair. I have pointed out that Charles Wesley frequently stresses the dark side of life and that he was capable of writing poetry which explores the darkness of human existence as well as the height of union with God. He could cry out:

> O what an evil Heart have I,
>   So cold, and hard, and blind,

With Sin so ready to comply,
  And cast my GOD behind!
                    (IV, 445)

Or:

With Pity, Lord, a Sinner see
  Weary of thy Ways, and Thee:
    Forgive my fond Despair
A Blessing in the Means to find
My Struggling to throw off the Care
    And cast them all behind.
                    (III, 272)

This "fond Despair" and the effort to cast it off were recurring themes for Charles Wesley, and his hymns are filled with images which reflect this struggle with doubt. He asks:

Why should I longer live
  In Unavailing Pain?
                    (IV, 328)

But the answer is usually a promise of freedom from doubt, a bright side to the spiritual fears that flesh is heir to.

The connection between Wesley's hymns and the seventeenth-century religious poets is made clearer when one remembers that the Moravians in their hymns touched both the metaphysicals and the hymns of Charles Wesley. The first chapter of Hymns Unbidden by Martha Winburn England is titled "George Herbert and John Donne among the Moravians." She points out that the physical details of the crucifixion held a fascination for the Moravian hymn writers:

Holy Side-wound, pierced Pleura,
  Heart of Jesu, rent for me!
Thou unfathomable Side-hole,
  Fain would I be lost in thee.

Ever a sure Rock-hole
Art thou to my Man-soul,

Which from the Hole of the Pit
  Hewn and split,
Always weeps and pants for it.[3]

Frequently this extreme language is expressed in more personal and deeply passionate terms:

I cannot possibly leave off!
I have not thee embrac'd enough;
I kiss thee yet once more
On thy bespittled bloody Cheeks;
My longing must have what it seeks
On thy unnumber'd Wounds and Sores.
Upon thy Head I kiss the prints
Made by the num'rous thorny Points,
I kiss the Feet and Hands,
The Back depriv'd of skin and flesh,
The Cov'nant Blood's so early gash,
The Cave which in thy pierc'd Side stands.[4]

At times the imagery becomes gruesome:

Yes, Corpse like dewy snow,
  And still grave-steaming Fingers!
Your Servant's bone sweat thro',
  Which quiv'ring for it lingers.
Thou Corpse's Air! Come, come
  Thro' these hands into th' Bread:
When kneaded with thy Fume,
  'Twill make the Members dead.[5]

Or uses language that is grotesque:

Thou Reason's Labyrinth,
  Thou *Tohu Vehabohu*
For the confed'rate troop
  Of Blood-Light-shunning *Uhu*;

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[3] Moravian Hymn-book, *Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeine in Herrnhut*, Part II (Sect II), No. 447.

[4] *Ibid.*, Part II (Sect II), No. 432.

[5] *Ibid.*, Part II (Sect II), No. 350.

We Sinners, who surround
  Thy Side's dear cavity,
Agree that in this Wound
  We'll dwell eternally.[6]

I have already indicated that Wesley at times employed the methods of the "Blood-and-Wounds" school ("Ah! lovely Appearance of Death!" [VI, 193-195] and "Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd" [VI, 189-190]), but aside from entire hymns which employ rather excessive or violent imagery, the hymns of Wesley contain numerous isolated images which remind one of the unusual imagery of the Moravians or the metaphysical poets. The utter paradox in "The Plague presents thy healing Wings,/ And Nature's final Hour" (VI, 95), is an example of this abrupt, or even shocking image. The most obvious relationship, of course, lies in the multitude of images (most of them scriptural) which stress the blood of Christ and other physical details of the crucifixion as the panacea for man's spiritual sickness. Wesley never went so far as the Moravians, but he did employ imagery which is very effective:

Five bleeding Wounds He bears,
  Receiv'd on Calvary;
They pour effectual Prayers,
  They strongly speak for me.
                                        (II, 323)

From this rather mild imagery to lines such as "Melt happy Soul, in JESU's Blood,/ Sink down into the Wounds of God" (III, 168) Wesley stressed through every means at his command the effectiveness of the blood of Christ, and at times the imagery is almost as excessive as that of the Moravians.

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[6] *Ibid*., Part II (Sect II), No. 406. *Tohu Vehabohu* is explained in a note as "Chaos, without form and void"; *Uhu*, as "owls."

Charles Wesley is not a metaphysical poet--at least he was not of the "school" of Donne and Herbert; nevertheless, the tone, the texture, and the imagery of his hymns are in some ways quite similar to their compositions. Basically it is the dramatic content of the metaphysicals which we find in Wesley--and which is lacking, for the most part, in the works of other hymn writers.

The second and by far the most important influence on Wesley's imagery is the Bible. I have stressed imagery drawn from other sources throughout my thesis, not because images drawn from the Bible are not important in Wesley's work, but because they are so numerous that it is almost impossible to point out each instance. Consider the following hymn:

Jesus, the First and Last,
On Thee my soul is cast:
Thou didst the work begin
By blotting out my sin;
Thou wilt the root remove,
And perfect me in love.

Yet when the work is done
The work is but begun:
Partaker of thy grace,
I long to see thy face;
The first I prove below,
The last I die to know.
(XI, 233)

This is an entire hymn, but consider how much there is in it of the Bible.

> I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which was, and which is, and which is to come (Revelations 1:8).
>
> Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee (Psalm 55:12).
>
> He which hath begun a good thing in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6).
>
> According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions (Psalm 51:1).

> Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up (Matthew 15:13).
>
> Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13).
>
> I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do (John 17:4).
>
> Ye are all partakers of my grace (Philippians 1:7) with whom I am . . . a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed (I Peter 5:1).
>
> They shall see his face, and his name shall be in their heads (Revelation 12:4).
>
> Now we see as in a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known (I Corinthians 13:12).

So in twelve lines we have Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel. Sometimes we have interpretation, sometimes only the verbal echo of the Bible. But the discipline of the scripture is always there. As C. Lawrence Ford insists, the hymns of Charles Wesley "form almost a complete mosaic of Scripture language, much more so than is evident to the cursory observer, or even the ordinary Biblical student. Someone has said that they form a running commentary on the Bible. I would rather say that they would serve as a first-rate test in an examination,--and rather a severe test,--of a candidate's acquaintance with Scripture. Hence, in studying these hymns we are, in a certain sense, studying the Word itself. . . . Charles Wesley prefers to quote and interweave, and combine the actual words of the Sacred Oracles, often in the most intricate fashion and in most unexpected ways."[7]

Wesley had a gift--almost a magic touch--for seizing upon the visible and earthly then by means of biblical language of transmuting it into spiritual truth. In the following stanza Wesley writes of the power of God in creation in such a way that it is related to conversion:

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[7] Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, Vol. II, Part 7, p. 175.

Long o'er my Formless Soul
The dreary Waves did roll:
Void I lay and sunk in Night:
Thou the overshadowing Dove,
Call'dst the Chaos into Light,
Bad'st me Be, and live, and love.
(I, 99)

Behind this stands Genesis 1:1, but even as a counterpoint to the Bible there are lingering echoes of Milton. Allusions to poets are few, however, in relation to the vast weight of scriptural echoes which we find in Wesley. To consider the use of the Bible in his imagery, I offer the following hymn; it is not particularly "loaded" with images drawn from the Bible, but is typical of his compositions.

O Filial Deity,
Accept my New-born Cry!
See the Travail of thy Soul,
Saviour, and be satisfy'd;
Take me now, possess me whole,
Who for Me, for Me hast dy'd!

This stanza contains two images. The first is the figure of the human being as a child, and this is taken, of course, from John 3:3, which states "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." There are many other references to the new birth of man in the scripture, and Wesley's "New-born Cry" brings this biblical image to mind quickly. The second image is an echo of Isaiah 53:11, "He shall see the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied." In this verse "he" refers to God the Father, who shall be satisfied only when the Son suffers on the cross. There is some difficulty with syntax in Wesley's line "See the travail of thy soul," but he obviously refers to the fact that Christ is God so that in one sense God is seeing his own suffering.

The second stanza contains more biblical images:

> Of Life Thou art the Tree,
> My Immortality!
> Feed this tender Branch of thine,
> Ceaseless Influence derive,
> Thou the true, the heav'nly Vine,
> Grafted into Thee I live.

Quite logically in this stanza Wesley wishes to show the method by which the believer, once he is born again, may continue steadfast in the Christian life. He begins by using the image drawn from Revelation 22:2: "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." But this image is transformed quickly into one which is much more intimate; the words "Feed this tender Branch of thine" are drawn from the Bible also. Jesus in speaking of the particular relationship which must exist between God and man said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. . . . Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15: 1, 4-5). The doctrinal aspects of this relationship with God are brought home with the last image in the stanza--"Grafted into Thee I live." The seventeenth chapter of Romans is devoted to an extended metaphor which speaks of the Christian as a branch which has been grafted into the tree (in contrast with the Jew who was there by nature.) Wesley's image would come with no great shock to his congregation, for most of the singers would have heard or read these portions of the scripture many times.

If they had not, John Wesley's intention of using his brother's hymns as a teaching instrument, to augment the study of the scriptures, would have some effect.

The third stanza shifts from one figure to another, but the theme is the same--to express the dependency of man on the grace of God:

> Of Life the Fountain Thou,
> I know--I feel it now!
> Faint and dead no more I droop:
> Thou art in me: Thy Supplies
> Ev'ry Moment springing up
> Into Life Eternal rise.

Scriptural images using the fountain as the source of the creature's life and being are numerous. "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Revelation 21:6) is perhaps the best known New Testament verse, but the Old Testament uses of this image are easily found, such as "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1). The more astute Bible scholar might perhaps recognize the less familiar scriptures which use this figure, such as "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life" (Proverbs 14:26).

Still another image dominates stanza four:

> Thou the Good Shepherd art,
> From Thee I ne'er shall part:
> Thou my Keeper and my Guide,
> Make me still thy Tender Care,
> Gently lead me by thy Side,
> Sweetly in thy Bosom bear.

The imagery of Psalms 23 is familiar to most people. Wesley adds little to the biblical version except that in the final line there is a sense of closeness which is perhaps more vivid than in the Psalm.

> Thou art my Daily Bread;
> O CHRIST, Thou art my Head:
> Motion, Virtue, Strength to Me,
> Me thy Living Member flow;
> Nourish'd I, and fed by Thee,
> Up to Thee in all things grow.

In this stanza the imagery is somewhat confused, but the Bible still dominates the theme. Line one contains a play on words--one that is missed by most people. The figure is taken from "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11), but Wesley changes the figure so that the Christian is urged to "feed" on Christ for his nourishment. There is, of course, a reference to the words of Christ in John 15, "I am the bread of life." The second line shifts abruptly to an image that Paul chose to represent the relationship of God to his people: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18). The entire book of Colossians is an extended metaphor with Christ as the "head" of the "members" (the individual Christian).

The next stanza suddenly shifts from the dependency of the Christian on God to an image which sets forth the nature of Christ:

> Prophet, to me reveal
> Thy Father's perfect Will,
> Never Mortal spake like Thee,
> Human Prophet like Divine;
> Loud and strong their Voices Be,
> Small and still and inward thine.

In this stanza the work of Christ as a prophet is set forth, and we remember the words of the woman of Samaria, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4:19), which are reflected in line one. Line two contains an echo of Romans 12:2 ". . . that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." The third line which states "Never mortal spake like thee" is much like the words of the Roman officers who said of Christ, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). It is quite logical that since Wesley is speaking of the function of Christ as a prophet he should draw two verses out of the Old Testament to illustrate his theme. The first--"Loud and strong their Voices be"--seems to refer to the frequent instructions of God to the prophets to "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumphet" (Isaiah 58:1), but the last line insists that the prophetic function of Jesus is different. To prove this Wesley reaches back to the book of First Kings, 19:12. Only a careful student of the Bible would be able to comprehend the significance of this final image, for it is necessary to know the entire story of Elijah's conflict with Ahab, a story which takes up some five chapters of First Kings, before we receive the full impact of the image. It is not an image for the biblically illiterate, and no doubt most people would fail to associate the "small" voice of Wesley's hymn with the story of Elijah. Yet it is there, and there are multitudes of brief, passing references to little-known stories of the Bible in almost every hymn that Wesley wrote.

And what should logically follow the image of Christ as Prophet? Christ as Priest, of course! This is what the next stanza does--and what should the next stanza after this emphasize? Who could not fill in the blank on the series "Prophet, Priest, and _______"?

> O Thee my Priest I call,
> Thy Blood aton'd for all.
> Still the Lamb as slain appears,

> Still Thou stand'st before the Throne,
> Ever off'ring up thy Pray'rs,
> These presenting with thy own.

Wesley begins with the word "Priest," and this use of the word must call forth Hebrews 8:1: "Now of the things we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Very well--but Wesley proceeds to form those elaborations on biblical imagery which he did so well. We shift suddenly from Hebrews to Revelation and the intensely dramatic scene which is actually one brilliant and vivid image: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Revelation 5:6). In verse 10 of the same chapter we read "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests." Is it possible that the very knowing Bible scholar could receive this image by associating the verse which follows the reference? Perhaps so, but it would take an individual saturated with scripture--a man such as Charles Wesley, perhaps.

The final stanza continues the series--Prophet, Priest, and finally King:

> JESU! Thou art my King,
> From Thee my Strength I bring!
> Shadow'd by thy mighty Hand,
> Saviour, who shall pluck me thence?
> Faith supports, by Faith I stand
> Strong as thy Omnipotence.

Christ is a King, then, but what is most characteristic of a King? He must have power. Wesley jumps into the breach by using two images which convey the impression of power. "He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me" (Isaiah 49:2) is the first; the second uses the figure of the hand of God again: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me is greater than all: and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). Christ was speaking, of course, of the power of the Son, but in Wesley's mind there was little difference and the image is clear.

Wesley's hymns, then, are charged with dogma and with scriptural language--some direct and some oblique. This extended discussion of biblical allusions in a single hymn could be repeated with most of Wesley's compositions, but it is not necessary, for the principle is clear. It was the intention of Charles Wesley to saturate his congregations with scripture. "His verse," Baker insists, "is an enormous sponge filled to saturation with Bible words, Bible similes, Bible metaphors, Bible stories, Bible ideas."[8] It is hardly an exaggeration to say that despite a broad knowledge of secular literature Wesley's chief inspiration was the Bible. Even his prose was flavoured with the language of Israel. Take a quotation from a typical passage in his *Journal* dated 7 October 1762: "By four we came to a *land of rest*; for the brethren of Bristal have *stopped the mouths of gainsayers*, and fairly *overcome evil with good*. At present, *peace is in all their*

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[8] *Representative Hymns*, p. xxv.

borders. The *little foxes that spoil the vineyard*, or rather, *the wild boars out of the wood that root it up*, have *no more place among them*." Every phrase I have italicized is taken from the Bible. He lived and thought in the Bible, and so his hymns often are pictures painted with biblical phrases for his pigments. But his work is not an agglomeration, but a patterned design, and the poetic triumph of his hymns is that he weaves the fabric of his patterned verse out of biblical phrases and images so skilfully that the artistry of the poet and the didacticism of the preacher flow together so smoothly that the result is a unique instrument for theological teaching *and* poetry that has a high artistic value. Most hymnodists rely heavily on the Bible as a source, and many hymn writers have produced compositions which contain good poetry. The achievement of Wesley rests on the fact that he was able to combine the use of biblical language with the art of the poet consistently.

The final comment which should be made on the imagery of Charles Wesley's hymns is that it stands apart from that of other hymn writers. "Other writers" means, for all practical purposes, Isaac Watts and William Cowper, for these three men dominated hymn writing during the eighteenth century.

So much has been written about Isaac Watts and his great contribution to hymnody that little time need be devoted to his work except that segment which touches on the work of Wesley. His hymns were epoch-making; they grew directly out of his attempts to accommodate the content of metrical psalmody to Christian truth. When Watts and other poets of the time realized the difference between lines written for private meditation and devotion and those written for corporate public praise, England was well on her way to modern hymnody.

Watts brought several new ideas of importance into hymn writing. He was the first person to produce a successful hymn book in the modern sense. Hymns and Spiritual Songs in Three Books appeared in 1707. The First Book contains 150 pieces which he describes as "Collected from the Scriptures." Here he has paraphrased passages of Scripture much in the style of Tate and Brady except that he happened to be a better poet. But in the Second Book he launched out; it contains 170 pieces "Compos'd on Divine Subjects." These are the sorts of pieces we now think of as hymns. The Third Book contained pieces for the Lord's Supper. These hymns were written in the simplest metres so as to fit tunes which are suitable for congregational singing. In comparison with anything that went before it, it is a very practical book, and it enjoyed a large circulation from the start. To Watts more than any other man is due the triumph of the hymn in English worship, and if his work is rough and grotesque in contrast to that of Wesley, it is simply due to the fact that he hewed his way through an unexplored territory.

The basic difference between the imagery of Watts and Wesley is the point of view of the two men. Charles Wesley in his hymns concerns himself mainly with God and the soul of man--their manifold relations, their estrangement, their reconciliation, their union. Watts, no less than Wesley, finds the Cross the center of his thought, but he sees the Cross as Milton had seen it, planted on a globe hung in space, surrounded by the vast distances of the universe. He sees the drama in Palestine prepared before the beginning of time and still decisive when time has ceased to be. There is a sense of the spaciousness of nature, of the vastness of time, of the dreadfulness of eternity in Watts which is not felt so clearly in Wesley. There is, I believe, a cosmic background in the hymns of Watts which one does not sense in Wesley's work. No thought is more typical of Watts's sense of the immensity of God's creation than in the last verse of his best-known hymn, "Were the whole realm of nature mine"; the whole realm of Nature--no thought, no expression is more characteristic of Watts than this. He constantly surveys the whole realm of nature and finds at the center of it a crucified and dying Creator. In this Watts is Milton's disciple. The spaciousness of the firmament is always appearing in his hymns, and he cannot glance or look at so vast an expanse of time and space as the scene unfolds without relating it to the God of redemption.

> Ere the blue heavens were stretched abroad
> From everlasting was the Word.

There is a Miltonic quality in these lines; Watts senses that the "blue heavens" alone provide an adequate background for any thought of the Word. In Wesley this sense of sublimity is partly lost in the intense examination of the human soul, but in Watts it leads straight to the awareness of the sovereignty of God.

> God is a name my soul adores
> The almighty Three, the eternal One;
> Nature and grace, with all their powers,
> Confess the Infinite unknown.
>
> Thy voice produced the sea and spheres,
> Bade the waves roar, the planets shine;
> But nothing like Thyself appears
> Through all the spacious works of Thine.

Still restless nature dies and grows,
  From change to change the creatures run;
Thy being no succession knows,
  And all thy vast designs are one.

A glance of Thine runs through the globe,
  Rules the bright worlds, and moves their frame;
Of light Thou form'st Thy dazzling robe,
  Thy ministers are living flame.

How shall polluted mortals dare
  To sing Thy glory or Thy grace?
Beneath Thy feet we lie afar,
  And see but shadows of Thy face.

Who can behold the blazing light?
  Who can approach consuming flame?
None but Thy wisdom knows Thy might,
  None but Thy word can speak Thy name.[9]

This is not the method of Charles Wesley. The imagery is limited in the sense that there are no subtle figures interwoven to form a pattern, but even more limited in that God is a Cosmic Being and not a friendly, approachable deity such as Wesley loved to present through his images. Nature, the creation, the cosmos are thrown up as a background against which the Creator with his "vast designs" moves. This God is not the figure which Wesley frequently puts before us--the loving God with His arms outstretched to receive penitent sinners to His bosom--but a Being who cannot be approached. The following hymn, though less august, shows the same perception of the great realm of Nature:

Firm are the words His prophets give,
Sweet words, on which his children live;
Each of them is the voice of God
Who spoke and spread the skies abroad.

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[9] This and all other hymns of Watts are from the Second Book of *Hymns and Spiritual Songs in Three Books* (1707).

Each of them powerful as the sound
That bid the new-made world go round;
And stronger than the solid poles
On which the wheel of nature rolls.

O for a strong, a lasting faith
To credit what my Maker saith,
T' embrace the message of His Son
And call the joys of heaven our own!

Then, should the earth's old pillars shake
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steady souls should fear no more
Than solid rocks when billows roar.

Our everlasting hopes arise
Above the ruinable skies,
Where the eternal Builder reigns,
And His own courts His power sustains.

The cosmic setting of the faith is clearly set forth in these lines; it is "the eternal Builder" rather than the God of Mercy that dominates the imagery. The machinery of the universe shows through as "the wheels of nature" move, and it is Watts' gift to display through imagery the power of God rather than His milder aspects. This is due in part to his flair for the use of the memorable word. In the phrase "should the earth's old pillars shake" there is a touch of this ability in the choice of the adjective "old." We want Watts to say "ancient" or to use a more dignified word, but the monosyllable is typical of his method. In page after page of his work we find whole stanzas in monosyllables, and many hymns contain no Latin words at all. Another instance of his ability to capture attention in a memorable word is his use of "ruinable." In this case the transitory nature of the entire created universe is set before us and made more striking by virtue of the fact that it is no small segment of the earth that is to cease, but the skies and the entire universe. It is highly effective, then, for Watts to set forth the concept of the Christian's safety as a contrast to these elements of the cosmos which must change.

This continual and certain change is a key to Watts' imagery, for he repeatedly contrasts the eternal life of God with the transitoriness of His creatures.

> The sea and sky must perish too,
>   And vast destruction comes;
> The creatures--look, how old they grow
>   And wait their fiery doom.
>
> Well, let the sea shrink all away
>   And flame melt down the skies;
> My God shall live an endless day
>   When th' old creation dies.

Or

> Well, the Redeemer's gone
>   T' appear before our God,
> To sprinkle o'er the flaming throne
>   With his atoning blood.

Or:

> Well, if our days must fly,
>   We'll keep their end in sight.

This use of "Well" as an exclamation is habitual with Watts, and it adds a grotesquely colloquial touch to some of his solemn passages.

Another characteristic of Watts' compositions is his love of simple, everyday language, and there are times when he out-Wordsworths Wordsworth. Just as Wordsworth at times made the sublime ridiculous by his kindergarten expression, so also did Watts. At its best Watts' language is pure and transparent. It is as pure Anglo-Saxon as Bunyan's own:

> Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
> Stand dressed in living green.

But at its worst it is banal beyond belief:

> But they in murmuring language said,
>   'Manna is all our feast.
> We loathe this light, this airy bread,
>   We must have flesh to taste.'
>
> 'Ye shall have flesh to please your lust!
>   (The Lord in wrath replied)
> And sent them quails like sand or dust,
>   Heap'd up from side to side.
>
> He gave them all their own desire;
>   And greedy as they fed,
> His vengeance burnt with secret fire,
>   And smote the rebels dead.

There are times, however, when the simplicity becomes grand and explodes into violence:

> They love the road that leads to hell;
>   Then let the rebels die
> Whose malice is implacable
>   Against the Lord on high.
>
> But if thou hast a chosen few
>   Amongst that impious race,
> Divide them from the bloody crew
>   By Thy surprising grace.

This violence is frequently connected to Judgment Day:

> The angry nations fret and roar
> That they can slay the saints no more;
> On wings of vengeance flies our God
> To pay the long arrears of blood.

Or Satan:

> Now Satan comes with dreadful roar,
>   And threatens to destroy;
> He worries whom he can't devour
>   With a malicious joy.

At times the imagery grows almost frantic:

> Break out their teeth, eternal God,
> Those teeth of lions dyed in blood,
>   And crush the serpents in the dust,
> As empty chaff, when whirlwinds rise,

Before the sweeping tempest flies,
  So let their hopes and names be lost.

We may say of Watts that he has perhaps a more philosophic approach to human life and to the Christian revelation, but that Wesley is the greater artist. The tone of Charles Wesley's hymns was in contrast to that of Watts, for Wesley leaned toward a more subjective, more personal and intimate tone, while Watts usually set forth the glorious majesty of God. The fact is that Watts was Calvinistic in belief and his work was among non-conformists, while Wesley was an Arminian, and his education was Anglican. Most important of all, the Wesleys were engaged in personal evangelism among the lower orders while Watts rested secure in the comfort of a religious establishment; Watts could afford to think of the majesty of God, but the Wesleys were forced to consider the human element to a great extent. In other words, Watts used a telescope; he saw Christian truth on a cosmic background. Charles Wesley used a microscope and saw the experience of God in the soul.

William Cowper, one of the few English poets who excelled in hymn writing, has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention. His hymns both in their doctrinal implications[10] and their poetic imagery[11] have been studied. The details of Cowper's strange and tragic life are to be found in several competent biographies, and I shall make little comment on his personal experience.

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[10] See Gilbert Thomas, William Cowper and the Eighteenth Century (London, 1935), pp. 217-224, and Hoxie Neal Fairchild, Religious Tendencies in English Poetry, II (New York, 1942), 174-175. Three unpublished doctoral theses have dealt with the Evangelical relationships: Louise Lanham, "The Poetry of William Cowper in Its Relation to the English Movement" (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1936); Wendell Magee Keck, "Cowper's Olney Hymns: A Theological Study," Abstracts of Dissertations (Stanford University), XVI (1940-41), 87-89; Adelaide E. Thein, "The Religion of William Cowper, an Attempt to Distinguish between His Obsession and His Creed," Microfilm Abstracts, V, No. 1 (1943), 24-25.

Eric Routley's contention that "Cowper's hymns, like all the rest of his work, reflect his personality clearly and inevitably"[12] is probably true, but such a sweeping statement must be documented by a more thorough study in both his hymns and his secular verse. I do see one basic difference between the imagery of Cowper and that of Watts and Wesley; the Olney Hymns are more limited in scope and theme than are the compositions of either Watts or Wesley. As I have pointed out, Watts' theme was the God of the Cosmos, while Wesley stressed the compassionate nature of God; the imagery in the works of each man represents an attempt to set these respective concepts before the singer. Cowper's imagery, on the other hand, is a record of one man's struggle with religious doubt. This struggle appears in the hymns of both Watts and Wesley, but with Cowper it is the dominating theme. He was concerned with the dilemma which involves a phase of fundamental Calvinistic belief--the doctrine of election. A man could tell that he was elected only if he could discover through an inner feeling that God was within him. No other hymn writer has dared so fearlessly to point out the pitfalls in the path of the convert, and three images have been identified by Lodwick Hartley as the key to most of Cowper's poetic method in the Olney Hymns.[13]

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[11] Maurice J. Quinlan, "Cowper's Imagery," JEGP, XLVII (1948), 276-285.

[12] I'll Praise My Maker (London, 1951), pp. 61-62.

Cowper's favorite image for the humility which (he felt) the human being must possess if he is to find God is the worm. His conversion hymn plainly sets the tone for many of his later compositions:

> I was a groveling creature once,
> And basely cleav'd to earth;
> I wanted spirit to renounce
> The clod that gave me birth.
>
> But God has breath'd upon a worm,
> And sent me, from above,
> Wings, such as clothe an angel's form,
> The wings of joy and love.[14]

The image occurs so frequently that it becomes part of the texture of the entire work. In XLI Cowper speaks of "thy rebellious worm," in XLII man is "but a worm," in LXII men are referred to as "sordid worms," and in LXIV man is a "vain-glorious worm." Cowper's character contained the rare vice of over-penitence; he was self-distrustful and self-depreciatory to the point of disease. "Such was his intellectual preciseness," Eric Routley points out, "that he lay constantly in danger of what modern psychology calls perfectionism. He would accept nothing that was not demonstrably and impregnably right; no conclusion, no course of action, no peace of which he could not be certain with a certainty that is simply, by the laws of God and nature denied to mortals."[15] At this late date there is little possibility that any scholar will prove that Cowper's madness was the direct result of his religious fears, but it is clear that his choice of images to convey the nature of man, especially of his own nature, does not reveal a stable disposition. Characterizing himself as a worm, a beast, and a moth of a day, he confesses filthiness of thought and baseness of motive with the same sincerely pious exaggeration that Bunyan had used and that many of his Evangelical contempories employed. His concept of himself is revealed by the image of a fountain which sent forth not clean water but a polluted stream:

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[13] "The Worm and the Thorn: A Study of Cowper's Olney Hymns."

[14] Poetical Works, ed. H.S. Milford (London, 1967), No. LIV, Other hymns of Cowper are taken from this text and will be indicated by Roman numerals.

[15] Routley, p. 78.

> This heard, a fountain of vile thoughts,
>   How does it overflow?
> While self upon the surface floats
>   Still bubbling from below.
> (XI)

In XII he uses the image of a beast:

> My God! till I receiv'd thy stroke,
>   How like a beast was I!
> So unaccustom'd to the yoke,
>   So backward to comply.

In a later hymn (XVI) the heart is compared with the temple in Mark 11:17:

> Devoted as it is to thee,
> A thievish swarm frequents the place;
> They steal away my joys from me,
> And rob my Saviour of his praise.

These and other images reveal the loathing that Cowper had for those impulses in his own soul which were not pure; we can safely say that Wesley had the same contempt and horror of sin but a more healthy mind to combat the fears.

The thorn is a common image in Cowper's work; usually it is symbolic of the suffering that Christians must undergo during their pilgrimage to heaven. In Hymn XLIV, composed at a period when he had faith in his own salvation, he observes:

> Lord, who hast suffer'd all for me,
> My peace and pardon to procure;
> The lighter cross I bear for thee
> Help me with patience to endure.
>
> The storm of loud repining hush,
> I would in humble silence mourn;
> Why should th' unburnt, tho' burning bush,
> Be angry as the crackling thorn?
>
> Man should not faint at thy rebuke,
> Like Joshua falling on his face,
> When the curst thing that Achan took,
> Brought Israel into just disgrace.
>
> Perhaps some golden wedge suppress'd,
> Some secret sin offends my God;
> Perhaps that Babylonish vest
> Self-righteousness, provokes the rod.
>
> Ah! were I buffeted all day,
> Mock'd crown'd with thorns, and spit upon,
> I yet should have no right to say,
> My great distress is mine alone.
>
> Let me not angrily declare
> No pain was ever sharp like mine;
> Nor murmur at the cross I bear,
> But rather weep, rememb'ring thine.

It would have been well for Cowper's state of mind had he been able to maintain this resolve, but in Number LXII we hear a note of depression in another image using the thorn:

> No more I ask, or hope to find,
> Delight or happiness below;
> Sorrow may well possess the mind
> That feeds where thorns and thistles grow.

Perhaps the most poignant image of this type is found in Number LIV:

> I want that grace that springs from thee,
> That quickens all things where it flows;
> And makes a wretched thorn, like me,
> Bloom as the myrtle, or the rose.

The third most frequent image in Cowper's work is that of the storm, and as is true with Wesley's hymns, the storm usually indicates the nature of the storm within the heart of man.

> Fierce passions discompose the mind,
>   As tempests vex the sea;
> But calm content and peace we find,
>   When, Lord, we turn to Thee.
> (XIX)

But the following hymn (XXXVIII) is probably Cowper's best use of storm imagery:

> The billows swell, the winds are high,
> Clouds overcast my wintry sky;
> Out of the depths to thee I call,
> My fears are great, my strength is small.
>
> O Lord, the pilot's part perform,
> And guide and guard me thro' the storm;
> Defend me from each threat'ning ill,
> Control the waves, say, 'Peace, be still.'
>
> Amidst the roaring of the sea,
> My soul still hangs her hope on thee;
> Thy constant love, thy faithful care,
> Is all that saves me from despair.
>
> Dangers of ev'ry shape and name
> Attend the followers of the Lamb,
> Who leave the world's deceitful shore,
> And leave it to return no more.
>
> Tho' tempest-toss'd and half a wreck,
> My Saviour thro' the floods I seek;
> Let neither winds nor stormy main,
> Force back my shatter'd bark again.

Again and again in _Olney Hymns_ we encounter the sea of doubt, and it is safe to say that this imagery reflects that fear of eternal loss which followed William Cowper to the end of his life.

To conclude, then, we may say that William Cowper was the best poet of the three men who dominated the eighteenth-century hymn. In scope, however, he does not approach either Watts or Wesley. Watts probably had the best mind of the three, but he was hampered by the necessity of breaking new ground. In my opinion, the hymns of Charles Wesley represent the high tide of English hymnody. In structure, in scope, and certainly in metre he surpassed both his justly famous contemporaries.

Charles Wesley's poems, other than his hymns, are well constructed compositions, typical eighteenth-century versifications, not quite of the first class. His hymns, however, are vastly different from his other poetical work, and in two areas he made significant contributions to the growth of English hymnody. Watts had been the pioneer, but it was the work of Charles Wesley which made possible the final break with the older hymn traditions--especially his innovations with metre. The second and most important quality which he brought to the English hymn is a conclusive answer to those who prate of "art for art's sake," for many of his hymns have not only depth and beauty of thought in pure lyric form, but also serve the purpose of religious instruction. His genius consisted in adapting the languages and images of the Bible to the confines of the hymn. No writer of hymns has ever been able to take upon himself the teaching function of the congregational hymn and to make biblical allusions a positive asset in quite the manner of Charles Wesley. His hymns are theological statements, his imagery is drawn from the Bible in almost every instance--yet his work is somehow better for this. The limitations of the hymn become broader in his hands--so broad that he is able to plumb the depths and heights of the greatest of all human experiences. Perhaps the greatest tribute which one can pay to the hymns of Charles Wesley is to recognize that his intention to carry the English Bible to men and women in the form of lyric beauty is fully realized in his best work. His hymns are scripture set to music.

APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A

First lines of hymns used in study

The three hundred hymns used as the basis of this study are listed in alphabetical order. The first line is used rather than the title because in Wesley's published work the same hymn often appeared under as many as four different titles. The reference in parenthesis following the first line gives the location of the hymn in the Works.

1. A charge to keep I have (IX, 60-61)
2. Ah! gentle gracious Dove (III, 34-48)
3. Ah give me, Lord, my Sins to mourn (III, 220)
4. Ah! Lovely Appearance of Death! (VI, 193-195)
5. Ah tell us no more (III, 282-283)
6. Ah woe is me, a man of woe (VIII, 27-28)
7. Ah, wretched souls, who lifted up (VIII, 101-102)
8. Alas, for us, who need beware (XI, 273-274)
9. All Glory to God, and Peace upon Earth (IV, 112-113)
10. All Glory to God in the Sky (IV, 125-126)
11. All Praise to our Redeeming Lord (IV, 252-253)
12. All thanks be to God (IV, 210-211)
13. All-wise, all-good, almighty Lord (IV, 120-122)
14. All ye that pass by (IV, 371-372)
15. And are we yet alive (V, 466-467)
16. And can it be, that I should gain (I, 105-106)
17. And did my Lord on Earth endure (V, 149-151)
18. And is there Hope for me (VI, 123)
19. And let our Bodies part (V, 462-463)
20. And live I yet by Power Divine? (I, 74-76)
21. And what are we, who still withstand (X, 109-110)
22. Angels speak, let Man give Ear (IV, 107-108)
23. Arise, my Soul, arise (II, 323-324)
24. Arise, thou jealous God, arise, thy (VIII, 404-405)
25. Arise, thou jealous God, arise whose (IV, 202-203)
26. Arm of the Lord, Awake! (IV, 302-303)
27. Author of every Work Divine (IV, 198-199)
28. Awake, the woman's heavenly Seed (IX, 7)
29. Away with our Fears! our Troubles and Tears! (IV, 113-114)
30. Away with our Fears! the Godhead appears (IV, 203-204)
31. Be it my only wisdom here (IX, 260)
32. Bear me to the Sacred Scene (IX, 281)
33. Behold the Servant of the Lord! (V, 10-11)
34. Beneath thy shadow we abide (XII, 233-234)
35. Brim full of all Evil (XIII, 245)
36. Captain of Israel's host, and Guide (IX, 43)
37. Captain of the Church below (II, 213)
38. Christ, from whom all Blessings flow (I, 361-362)
39. Christ, my Life, my only Treasure (IV, 78)
40. Christ the Lord is ris'n to Day (I, 185-186)

41. Christ, whose Glory fills the Skies (I, 224-225)
42. Come and bring the Gospel down (III, 89-90)
43. Come, and let us sweetly join (II, 350-351)
44. Come away to the skies (VIII, 198-200)
45. Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one (IX, 65)
46. Come Father Son, and Holy Ghost, to (VI, 407-408)
47. Come, Holy Ghost, our Hearts inspire (I, 238-239)
48. Come, let us anew our Journey pursue (VI, 14)
49. Come, let us anew our Pleasures pursue (V, 282-284)
50. Come, let us away (VIII, 224-225)
51. Come, let us join our Friends above (VI, 215-216)
52. Come, let us with our Lord arise (VI, 429-430)
53. Come, O Thou Traveller unknown (II, 173-176)
54. Come on, my Partners in Distress (V, 168-169)
55. Come, Sinners, to the Gospel-Feast (IV, 276-277)
56. Come Thou long-expected Jesus (IV, 116)
57. Conscious of all that I have done (XIII, 144-145)
58. Each presents the officers (XI, 12)
59. Eternal Beam of Light Divine (I, 128)
60. Far from my Native Land remov'd (III, 145)
61. Far from passion, and from pride (VIII, 418-419)
62. Father of Mankind (III, 347)
63. Father, our Hearts we lift (IV, 114-115)
64. Father, since Thou permittest (XIII, 221)
65. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (III, 333-334)
66. Father, whose Everlasting Love (III, 3-5)
67. Forbid me not, O Lord (XII, 455-456)
68. Forgive my Foes? It cannot be: (XI, 55-56)
69. Forth in thy Name, O Lord, I go (V, 50-51)
70. Fountain of life and happiness (IX, 21)
71. From whence these dire portents around (VI, 24-25)
72. Full of Sin, and void of Thee (VIII, 364-365)
73. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild (VI, 441-442)
74. Give me, Lord, if thou art He (X, 245)
75. Glory be to God on high (IV, 108-109)
76. Glory, Love, and Praise, and honour (III, 364-365)
77. Glory to God, and Praise, and Love (I, 299-301)
78. Glory to the Paternal God (VII, 200)
79. God of Faithful Abraham, hear (VIII, 401-402)
80. God of glorious majesty (VI, 20-21)
81. God of Love, incline thine Ear! Christ (I, 223-224)
82. God of Love, incline thine ear, hear (XIII, 221)
83. God of Truth and Power and Grace (VIII, 441-443)
84. God of unexampled Grace (III, 229-231)
85. God over all supreme (VII, 12-13)
86. Hail happy Prince in whom we see (XII, 31-32)
87. Hail, Jesus, hail, our Great High-Priest (IV, 157-158)
88. Hail the bright auspicious Day (XI, 218)
89. Hail the Day that sees Him rise (I, 187-188)
90. Happy man whom God doth aid! (VI, 387-388)

91. Happy Soul, depart in Peace (III, 171-172)
92. Happy Soul, thy Days are ended (V, 216)
93. Happy the Man, who finds the Grace (IV, 234-235)
94. Hark how all the Welkin rings (I, 183-184)
95. He offer'd them sufficient light (XI, 495-496)
96. Head of thy Church Triumphant (IV, 79-80)
97. Head over all in earth and skies (VI, 121-122)
98. Hear, Holy Spirit, hear (I, 99-101)
99. Hence, lying world, with all thy care (VIII, 179-180)
100. Hide me in the peaceful shade (VIII, 321)
101. His only love constrains our hearts (II, 317)
102. How Beautiful His feet appear (II, 169-171)
103. How can a Sinner know (V, 363-365)
104. How dreadful is the Place (XII, 19-20)
105. How happy are the little Flock (IV, 77)
106. How happy are They (I, 123-125)
107. How long, how often shall I pray (VIII, 431-432)
108. How shall a Slave releast (V, 365-367)
109. I Too have done the same (XIII, 151)
110. If the just God himself consent (III, 234)
111. Immortal King of Kings (IV, 81-82)
112. Immortal Potentate (IV, 22-23)
113. Impower'd thro Moses hallowing hands (XIII, 129)
114. In Christ the mortal Judge (IV, 120)
115. In Jesus Christ we see (IV, 221, 222)
116. In the Belov'd accepted (VII, 223)
117. In this divine epitome (XII, 147)
118. It is the voice of my Belov'd (XII, 104-105)
119. Jesu, if still the same Thou art (I, 258-259)
120. Jesu, Love of my Soul (I, 259-260)
121. Jesu, thy waiting servants see (VI, 104-105)
122. Jesu, we Thus obey (III, 273-274)
123. Jesus, confirm my heart's desire (I, 214-215)
124. Jesus, help! no longer tarry (VII, 63-64)
125. Jesus, I believe in thee (XI, 419)
126. Jesus, my soul aspires (VIII, 370)
127. Jesus, purge our foul transgression (IX, 210-211)
128. Jesus, the first and the last (XIII, 221)
129. Jesus, to Thee I would look up (XIII, 253)
130. Jesus, with Kindest Pity see (V, 418-419)
131. Join all ye joyful Nations (IV, 110-112)
132. Lamb of God, whose Bleeding Love (III, 228-229)
133. Let Angels and Archangels sing (IV, 118-119)
134. Let Earth and Heaven agree (III, 71-73)
135. Let Earth and Heaven combine (IV, 109-110)
136. Let every Soul be Jesu's Guest (IV, 280-281)
137. Let God, the mighty God (VI, 149-150)
138. Let heathenish boys (VI, 434-435)
139. Let the rain descend, the cloud (X, 206)
140. Let the whole house of Israel know (XII, 150-151)
141. Let the winds blow, and billows roll (XIII, 135)

142. Let us pursue the God of Grace (X, 213-214)
143. Light of those whose dreary Dwelling (IV, 116-117)
144. Listed into the Cause of Sin (V, 397-398)
145. Lo! He comes with clouds descending (VI, 143-144)
146. Lo, we after Thee aspire (X, 211-212)
147. Long have I waited for the Lord (IX, 51-52)
148. Look forward to that happy Place (XI, 23)
149. Lord, I fain would learn of thee (X, 255)
150. Lord, I magnify thy power (VII, 60-61)
151. Lord, in the strength of grace (IX, 203)
152. Lord, not unto me (III, 6)
153. Lord over all, thy people hear (X, 333-334)
154. Love Divine, all Loves excelling (IV, 219-220)
155. Lovely-fair, but breathless clay (VII, 82-84)
156. Meet and right it is to sing (V, 279-280)
157. Melt happy Soul, in Jesu's Blood (III, 168-169)
158. Men of true piety (VIII, 444)
159. Mine earthly happiness is fled (VI, 252-253)
160. Most gracious Lord (XIII, 81-82)
161. My faith I hope to prove (VI, 73)
162. My God and Lord, thy counsel shew (VII, 181-183)
163. My God has spoken (II, 39-40)
164. My God, I am thine (V, 24)
165. My God is never far (III, 124-125)
166. My Help, and Refuge from my Foes (V, 62)
167. My Talents, Gifts, and Graces, Lord (X, 32)
168. Now the season is of love (XIII, 50)
169. O All-embracing Love Divine (IV, 123)
170. O Astonishing Grace (IV, 119-120)
171. O Filial Deity (I, 97-98)
172. O for an Heart to praise my God (II, 77-78)
173. O hear and answer me, O God (XII, 338-339)
174. O Heavenly King (II, 177-178)
175. O how happy am I here (III, 167-168)
176. O Love Divine, how sweet Thou art! (I, 341-342)
177. O Love unknown (V, 58-59)
178. O Mercy Divine (IV, 122-123)
179. O most patient God, forbear (VI, 166)
180. O Saviour of all (VI, 405-407)
181. O that I cou'd (V, 59-60)
182. O that I could look to thee (XIII, 152-153)
183. O that I was as heretofore (V, 105-106)
184. O that with ancient harmony (IV, 133-134)
185. O Thou, to whom all hearts are known (III, 129)
186. O Thou, who at thy Creature's Bar (V, 134-138)
187. O Thou who camest from above (IX, 58-59)
188. O what an evil Heart have I (IV, 445-447)
189. On us, O Christ, thy mission prove (X, 123)
190. Our Christian Joy is here (XII, 131)
191. Our Hearts we open wide (V, 234-235)
192. Patiently receiv'd from Thee (IX, 231)

193. Perfect, and right, and pure (VI, 233)
194. Praise be to the Father given; (III, 346)
195. Praise the Father for his love (VI, 464-465)
196. Prayer is the language of the heart (X, 177)
197. Rais'd from the people's lowest Lees (IX, 79)
198. Rapt to Pisgah's top I stand (IX, 118)
199. Redeemer of Mankind (XII, 321)
200. Rejoice for a Brother deceas'd (VI, 189-190)
201. Rejoice, the Lord is King! (IV, 140-141)
202. Resting in this glorious Hope (IV, 112)
203. Return'd into thy kingdom Lord (VIII, 343)
204. Save me, gracious Lord, for why? (IX, 275)
205. Saviour, Thou readst what is in man (II, 198)
206. See a rough draught of human life (XII, 115)
207. See from yonder heaven rise (VII, 213)
208. See how great a Flame aspires (V, 120-121)
209. See, Jesu, thy Disciples see (V, 469-470)
210. See the Day-spring from afar (I, 158-159)
211. See ye heirs of sure salvation (XIII, 218)
212. Send the Answer from above (X, 124)
213. Shepherd of souls (VI, 107-108)
214. Shepherd of Souls, the Great, the Good, who leadest (VIII, 161-165)
215. Shepherd of souls, the great, the good, who on (VIII, 420-421)
216. Sing the glorious One in Three (IV, 29-30)
217. Sing to the great Jehovah's praise! (VI, 16)
218. Sing we merrily to God (IX, 312)
219. Sing, ye ransom'd Nations sing (IV, 117-118)
220. Sinners, obey the Gospel-Word (V, 63-64)
221. Soldiers of Christ, arise (V, 40-44)
222. Solemn, memorable day (VIII, 409-410)
223. Sovereign, Everlasting Lord, (VIII, 15-17)
224. Speechless the Saviour stood (X, 419)
225. Stand th'Omnipotent Decree (VI, 95-95)
226. Still in the arms of faith and prayer (VI, 123-124)
227. Stupendous height of heavenly love (XI, 114-115)
228. Supreme, Almighty Lord (V, 230-231)
229. Sweet Day, so cool, so calm, so bright (VI, 213)
230. Teacher, Friend of foolish sinners (VIII, 148-149)
231. Thankful for our every Blessing (III, 367)
232. Thankful the Father's grace we own (VII, 200)
233. Thankful the token I receive (VIII, 123)
234. Thanks be to God, the God of Power (IV, 95-96)
235. The foolishness of preaching hear (XIII, 22-23)
236. The Joy of Earth and Heaven (III, 302)
237. The Lord is king (IX, 13-14)
238. The table of my heart prepare (IX, 94-95)
239. The voice of my Beloved sounds (IX, 363-364)
240. The wisdom of our Lord would chuse (XII, 129)
241. Thee, O my God and King (I, 97-96)
242. Thee, Saviour, I confess (VIII, 364)
243. Thee we never could have chose (XII, 27-28)

244. Then I may happy be (XI, 458)
245. This is the joy my soul desires (IX, 225)
246. Thou God of Truth and Love (V, 422-423)
247. Thou hidden Source of calm Repose (V, 50)
248. Thou righteous God (V, 231)
249. Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine (IX, 362-363)
250. Thou to me, O God, hast sent (IX, 355)
251. Three Persons there are (VII, 302)
252. Thy Blood of Sprinkling speaks (IX, 31)
253. Thy Causeless unexhausted love (IX, 55)
254. Thy ransom'd servant I remain (XII, 109)
255. Thy servant ready to depart (VIII, 384-385)
256. Thy weak disciple I (XII, 33)
257. Thy Wounds were open'd wide (XIII, 32-33)
258. To those the Lord hath called (VIII, 231)
259. To whom could thy disciples go (X, 223-224)
260. Troubles and sins, a countless crowd (IX, 296-297)
261. Try me, O Lord, & Search my Heart (XI, 231)
262. Try me then, and try me still (IX, 259)
263. Two are Better far than One (V, 452-454)
264. Victim Divine, thy Grace we claim (III, 301-302)
265. We the Father's Law receive (VII, 284)
266. Weakness still with ignorance (XII, 174)
267. Weary of all this worldy Strife (VI, 71-72)
268. What doth that silence mean? (XIII, 234)
269. What kind of man is this (X, 217)
270. What never, never more to sin! (XIII, 203)
271. What Tongue alas! can tell (IV, 328-329)
272. When, Dearest Lord, when shall it be? (II, 258-259)
273. When God returns to claim His own (XII, 203)
274. When He did our flesh assume (X, 41)
275. When our redeeming Lord (VIII, 241-243)
276. When shall my mournful Soul (VII, 125-126)
277. When the gospel of grace (XII, 186-187)
278. When Truth Divine comes (I, 304)
279. Where but on yonger Tree (IX, 257)
280. Where is that ancient power (X, 213-214)
281. Where is the holy heav'n-born Child? (IV, 123-124)
282. Where shall my wond'ring Soul begin (I, 91)
283. While Midnight shades the Earth o'erspread (I, 49-51)
284. While yet we call, the prayer is seal'd (VI, 122-123)
285. Who believes the Tidings: Who (IV, 317-322)
286. Who glory in your ripest grace (IX, 319)
287. Who meet on that Eternal Shore (IX, 231-232)
288. Who sent the son is true; (VII, 287-288)
289. Who, what are these, that as a cloud (IX, 454)
290. Who would not wish to know the Lord? (XIII, 31)
291. Wisdom Divine! Who tells the Price (XII, 194-195)
292. With glorious clouds incompast round (VII, 194-195)
293. With Joy we see (XI, 315)

294. With Pity, Lord, a Sinner see (III, 272)
295. Words cannot prove (XIII, 121)
296. Ye heavenly Choir (IV, 107)
297. Ye Jews of our days (XII, 251)
298. Ye Nations hear! (IX, 231-232)
299. Ye Servants of God, Your Master proclaim (IV, 50-51)
300. Ye simple Men of Heart sincere (IV, 106)

APPENDIX B

Types of Images

- I. COMPARATIVE (2,036)
  - Metaphor (1,809)
  - Simile (37)
  - Anthropoligia (57)
  - Personification (133)

- II. NON-COMPARATIVE (1,099)
  - A. General Sense Impressions (623)
    - Light and darkness (87)
    - Color (42)
    - Vision (266)
    - Smell (8)
    - Taste (42)
    - Sound (52)
    - Touch (126)
  - B. Other (476)
    - Eponym (34)
    - Metonymy (30)
    - Synecdoche (68)
    - Epithet (134)
    - Hyperbole (64)
    - Oxymoron (17)
    - Paradox (55)
    - Montage (35)
    - Hypotyposis (15)
    - Dramatic Monologue (18)
    - Allegory (6)

Total 3,135

APPENDIX C

Referents of Images

The Arabic figure indicates the number of times each referent occurs in the sampling.

303	Christ
138	Unregenerate man
108	Nature of Salvation
105	Regenerate man
102	God the Father
83	Heaven
64	Tribulation
62	Purity
61	Sin
40	Death
36	Christian duties
33	Blessings of God
32	Holy Spirit
27	Love of God
26	Worship
23	Hell
19	Earth
18	Church
14	Communion
12	Pride
11	Preachers, Body
10	Wisdom, Hatred, Blood
6	Child, Bible
5	Faith
4	Resurrection, Assurance
3	Man, Heart
2	Sea, Clouds, Grace Mercy, Wind
1	Kingdom, Tongues, Gospel, Mary, Cross, Woman, Fellowship, Stream, Youth, Invitation, Mercy, Anguish, Creation, Star, Temptation

APPENDIX D

Subject-Matter Categories

I. PUBLIC LIFE (588)
  - Government (25)
  - Royalty (89)
  - War (159)
  - Law (130)
  - Crime and punishment (185)

II. NATURE (477)
  - Plant life (24)
  - Animal life (81)
  - Minerals (32)
  - Earth (40)
  - Fire (26)
  - Water (73)
  - Heavens and weather (101)

III. PERSONAL LIFE (332)
  - Family relationships (21)
  - Love and courtship (11)
  - Friendship (23)
  - Parts of body (120)
  - Life processes (85)
  - Sickness (72)

IV. DAILY LIFE (299)
  - Employment (62)
  - Commerce (156)
  - Sports (23)
  - Traveling (58)

V. HOME LIFE (80)
  - Household (41)
  - Cooking (5)
  - Clothing (23)
  - Vessels (11)

VI. ART (63)
  - Writing (17)
  - Music (22)
  - Dance (5)
  - Architecture (11)
  - Sculptery (4)
  - Painting (4)

VII. MISCELLANEOUS (52)

TOTAL 1,891

APPENDIX E

Principal Texts of Charles Wesley's Verse

1. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London, 1739). by J. & C. Wesley; 139 unnumbered items by various unnamed authors, but mainly original or adaptations from George Herbert and others.

2. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London, 1740). by J. & C. Wesley; 105 unnumbered items, all original or adaptations by the Wesleys.

3. *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (Bristol, 1741). 18 items.

4. *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (London, 1741-2?). 28 items.

5. *The Character of a Methodist* (Bristol, 1742). by John Wesley; Appended to the 1st and 2nd. editions only is 'The Whole Armour of God.'

6. *The Whole Armour of God* (n.p., n.d.). (Broadsheet, British Museum, 1871).

7. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol, 1742). by J. & C. Wesley; 161 original unnumbered items.

8. *Collections of Psalms and Hymns* (2nd. edn, 'enlarged', London, 1743). by J. & C. Wesley; 1st edn (1741), by J. Wesley, included many non-Wesleyan items, some of which were dropped from the 2nd edn, to which many by Charles Wesley were added; 130 items).

9. *Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems* (Bristol, 1744). 3 vols by J. Wesley; at the end of Vol. III are 17 items by 'the Revd Mr John and Charles Wesley'.

10. *Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution* (London, 1744) 3 separately numbered parts, with a total of 33 items; to the 2nd edn were added 15 items 'For the year 1745'.

11. *Hymns for Times of Trouble* (n.p., n.d.; 1745?) 6 items.

12. *A Hymn at the Sacrament* (n.p., n.d.; 1745?).

13. *A Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion* (London, 1745).

14. *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (Bristol, 1745). by J. & C. Wesley; 166 items.

15. *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord* (n.p., n.d.; 1745) 18 items.

16. *Hymns for our Lord's Resurrection* (London, 1746). 16 items.

17. *Hymns for Ascension Day* (Bristol, 1746). 7 items.

18. *Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving for the Promise of the Father* (Bristol, 1746). 32 items; drop-title 'Hymns for Whit-Sunday.

19. *Gloria Patri*, &c., or *Hymns to the Trinity* (Bristol, 1746). 24 items.

20. *Hymns on the Great Festivals*, and other occasions (London, 1746). 24 items, with tunes by J. F. Lampe.

21. *Hymns for the Public Thanksgiving-Day, October 9, 1746* (London, 1746). 7 items.

22. *Funeral Hymns* (n.p., n.d.; 1746?). 16 items.

23. *Graces before Meat* (n.p., n.d.; 1746?), 26 items.

25. *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London* (London, 1747).

26. *Hymns for those that seek and those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ* (London, 1747). 52 items.

27. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Dublin, 1747). 37 items.

28. *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (Bristol, 1749). 2 vols, 'By Charles Wesley, M.A. Student of Christ-Church, Oxford'; published by subscription, largely in order to underwrite his marriage that year to Sarah Gwynne; 209 numbered items in Vol. I, and 266 in Vol. II.

29. *Hymns for the Watchnight* (n.p., n.d.). Although Green accepts this as an independent publication issued about 1746, it seems to have been issued after No. 28; apart from the opening item, which comes from No. 7, the Pamphlet consists solely of items selected from the 19 'Hymns for the Watchnight' in Vol. II of No. 28, nine in the order in which they there occur, together with a tenth selected from those originally passed over.

30. *Hymns for New Year's Day*, 1750 (Bristol, n.d.; 1749). 7 items.

31. *Hymns occasioned by the Earthquake, March 8, 1750* (London, 1750). two separately published parts having 6 items in the first and 13 in the second; to a joing reprint in 1756, occasioned by the Lisbon earthquake of 1755, 3 further items were added.

32. *Hymns and Spiritual Songs, intended for the use of real Christians of all denominations* (London, 1753). 84 items selected from Nos. 1, 2, and 7, with some slight alterations; prepared by John Wesley

as a general hymn-book for the Methodist Societies, and succeeded in 1761 by *Select Hymns*.

33. *Hymns for Social Worship, collected from various authors, and more particularly design'd for the use of the Tabernacle congregation*, in London. By George Whitefield. (London, 1753). Whitefield compiled this hymn-book upon the principles which led to the alteration of a number of the Wesley hymns. Being for 'social worship', singular pronouns usually became plural; eschewing long hymns Whitefield severely abridged a number of Wesley's, and in one case squeezed ten four-lined verses into five eight-lined, in order to make it *look* shorter. It has often been supposed that his other more general alterations--such as the transformation of 'Hark how all the welkin rings' to 'Hark! the herald angels sing'--were what John Wesley had principally in mind in his preface to the 1780 *Collection*, where he castigated re-writers of hymns. This is very unlikely, however, for Whitefield had then been dead almost ten years, and in any case Wesley did retain some of Whitefield's emendations. The first edition of Whitefield's *Hymns* contained 132 numbered 'hymns for Public Worship', followed by 11 doxologies, etc., and 38 'Hymns for Society and Persons meeting in Christian Fellowship'. Of these, 30 hymns and 3 doxologies were by the Wesleys, while 83 hymns and 2 doxologies were by Watts.

34. *Catholick Spirit. A Sermon. . . by John Wesley, M.A.* (London, 1755). appended is the poem 'Catholic Love'.

35. *An Epistle to the Reverend Mr John Wesley. By Charles Wesley, Presbyter of the Church of England* (London, 1755).

36. *An Epistle to the Reverend Mr George Whitefield. Written in the year MDCCLV. By Charles Wesley, A.M. Late Student of Christ-Church*, Oxford (London, 1771).

37. *Hymns for the Year 1756. Particularly for the Fast-Day, February 6, 1756* (Bristol, 1756). 17 items.

38. *Hymns of Intercession for all mankind* (Bristol, 1759). 40 items.

39. *Funeral Hymns* (London, 1759). 43 items; a collection quite independent of source 22.

40. *Hymns on the Expected Invasion* (n.p., 1759). 8 items; reissued in 1779, when another invasion threatened.

41. *Hymns to be used on the Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 29, 1759, and after it* (n.p., n.d.). 15 items.

42. *Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England. By John Wesley, A.M. Printed in the year 1758. With Hymns for the preachers among the Methodists (so called), by Charles Wesley, A.M.* (London, 1760), 7 items.

43. *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns, extracted from various authors, and published by the Reverend Mr Madan* (London, 1760). Contains 170 numbered hymns, together with 8 unnumbered doxologies; of these, 89 hymns and 4 doxologies are by the Wesleys and 4 other hymns are selected from their publications, though not written by them. This *Collection*, together with the Appendix of 23 hymns issued by Madan in 1763, furnished the chief source from which many hymn-books for a century derived their knowledge--and their many altered texts--of the more familiar Wesley hymns.

44. *Hymns for those to whom Christ is All in all* (London, 1761). 134 items selected from Nos. 1, 2, 7, 9, 14, 26, and 28. The drop-title on p. i is simply "Select Hymns".

45. *Select Hymns: with Tunes annext: designed chiefly for the use of the people called Methodists* (London, 1761). 133 items with tunes selected by John Wesley from previous publications--the hymns themselves are not exclusively by the Wesleys. This was the second most important hymn-book for general use and completely overshadowed No. 44, issued during the same year, probably by Charles Wesley. The 2nd edn, published in 1765, was 'corrected and enlarged', one item being omitted, and 17 added. From the 4th edn (1773) onwards, the hymns were sometimes published separately from the tunes, entitled *Select Hymns for the use of Christians of all denominations*.

46. *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures. By Charles Wesley, M.A. and Presbyter of the Church of England* (Bristol, 1762). 2 vols, containing 1160 numbered hymns on the O.T. in Vol. I and a further 318 in Vol. II, together with 870 numbered hymns on the N.T.; in a posthumous 2nd. edition the number of hymns was reduced both by omission and by fusion to 1,328 and 817.

47. *Hymns for Children* (Bristol, 1763), 110 items; reprinted in 1766 and subsequently with the title *Hymns for Children and others of riper years*.

48. *Hymns for the Use of Families and on various occasions* (Bristol, 1767). 166 items.

49. *Hymns on the Trinity* (Bristol, 1767). 136 items based on various *sections of the Catholic Doctrine of a Trinity proved by above an hundred short and clear arguments, expressed in the terms of Holy Scripture*, first published in 1756 by William Jones of Nayland, an enlarged 3rd. edition appearing in 1767; appended are 52 'Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity'.

50. *An Elegy on the Late Reverend George Whitefield, M.A., . . . By Charles Wesley, M.A., Presbyter of the Church of England* (Bristol, 1771).

51. *Preparation for Death, in several hymns* (London, 1772). 40 items.

52. *The Arminian Magazine. Consisting of extracts and original treatises on universal redemption*. Vol. I (London, 1778). This monthly magazine was launched by John Wesley with the set purpose of combating the extreme views of some Calvinist teachers; it continued (and still continues) with a much wider purpose. From the very first volume there were not only poems acknowledge as by Charles Wesley, but others left anonymous--an annoying habit of John Wesley. In the *Magazine* for March 1779 John Wesley commenced reprinting selections from his brother's *Scripture Hymns* (no. 46), and 86 items appeared before the series ended in March 1783. In May, 1789, just over a year after Charles Wesley's death, John Wesley commenced publication in the *Magazine* of items from his brother's manuscript Scripture hymns. These continued to appear after his own death; 35 from the first eight chapters of Matthew having appeared by August 1792, and one more from Acts appearing in 1797--after which year the Magazine was renamed the *Methodist Magazine*. From 1797 to 1802 appeared Charles Wesley's versions of 32 Psalms, including the long series on Psalm 119.

53. *Hymns written in the time of the tumults, June 1780* (Bristol, 1780). 13 items.

54. *The Protestant Association. Written in the midst of the tumults,* June 1780 (London, 1781). 4 items.

55. *A Collection of Hymns, for the use of the People called Methodists* (London, 1780). 525 hymns selected, abridged, and revised by John Wesley. This volume, with Wesley's famous preface, dated 'Oct. 20, 1779', succeeded Nos. 32 and 45 as the general hymn-book for the Methodists. In these earlier volumes John Wesley had anticipated some of his revisions which became standardized through the 1780 *Collection*. A number of misprints were corrected, and further slight alterations made, in the 2nd. edition of 1781 and the 3rd. edition of 1782. This 3rd. edition represents the book as it left John Wesley's hands, though it suffered many alterations in succeeding years, both in the numbers and the text of the hymns, alterations both authorized and unauthorized. This *Collection* formed the nucleus of all subsequent major Methodist hymn-books, particularly of those in the main stream of Wesleyan Methodism.

56. *Hymns for the National Fast, Feb. 8, 1782* (London, 1792). 15 items.

57. *Hymns for the Nation in 1782* (n.p., n.d.). Two parts, published separately; 9 and 8 items.

58. *A Collection of Psalms and Hymns for the Lord's Day* (London, 1784). 118 items from No. 8; originally issued as a companion to John Wesley's revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*, his *Sunday Service*

of the Methodists in the United States of America (1784); enlarged by Dr. Thomas Coke after Wesley's death it became the authorized 'Morning Hymn Book' for use where Methodists held a liturgical service.

59. *Prayers for Condemned Malefactors* (London, 1785). 10 items.

60. *A Pocket Hymn Book for the Use of Christians of all Denominations* (London, 1785). 200 items; issued by John Wesley as a smaller version of No. 55; 39 Hymns from the larger *Collection* are reprinted, but the opportunity is taken to utilize some of the treasures omitted from the 1780 volume.

61. *A Pocket Hymn Book, for the use of Christians of all Denominations*. (London, 1787). 250 items, arranged in a similar way to No. 55; this volume was prepared to displace, not No. 61, but a pirated collection issued under the same title by Robert Spence of York.

62. *Hymns for Children* (London, 1787). 44 items selected from No. 47.

63. *A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People called Methodists. By the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* . . . With a supplement (London, 1831). Scores of editions differing from the 1780 *Collection* had come into use by the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the desire for greater variety outstripping reverence for Wesley's original selection. Both enlargement and a greater degree of standardization were clearly desirable, and after several abortive attempts the official solution was provided in 1831. The original selection was reduced by 12 and enlarged by 21, while 6 of the hymns were divided into two parts, a net gain of 15. A further 21 'Additional Hymns' were appended, numbered 540-60. There was appended--and also published separately--a *Supplement* containing 209 hymns. The Preface to the *Supplement*, dated 9th. November 1830, pointed out that its intention was to 'furnish a greater number of hymns suitable for public worship, for festivals, and for occasional services, than are found in that invaluable Collection'. These supplementary hymns were mainly by Charles Wesley, some being from his manuscripts; they also incorporate most of the 'Morning Hymn Book'. Henceforth this enlarged *Collection* and *Supplement*, containing 769 hymns numbered consecutively, was the standard Wesleyan hymn-book. Altogether it contained 623 hymns by Charles Wesley and 30 by John Wesley.

64. *A Collection of Hymns, for the use of the People called Methodists. By the Rev. John Wesley, M.A. With a New Supplement* (London, 1876). The Wesleyan Conference of 1874 authorized the issue of a new *Supplement* to the 1780 *Collection*. This time the *Supplement* did not appear separately, but only as appended to still another revised edition of the original *Collection*, containing this time 539 hymns, making a total of 1,026. Again there were some new accessions from Charles Wesley's manuscripts, but the main feature

was a far wider use of hymns by over a hundred other composers, of both the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Altogether 724 are noted as by Charles Wesley, and 26 as by John Wesley.

65. *The Methodist Hymn-Book* (London, 1904). The new title given to the standard hymn-book of the Methodists of the early twentieth century signalized that a new era had begun in Methodist hymnology. John Wesley's name was dropped from the title-page, and of the total of 981 hymns Charles Wesley was credited with 446, John Wesley with 29. The whole 'shape' of the *Collection*, with contents-divisions based on the stages in the spiritual experience of the Christian, was discarded for an arrangement under main sections devoted to 'The Glory of God', 'The Gospel Call', 'The Christian Life', 'The Church', 'Time, Death, Eternity', 'Family Religion', and 'Special Occasions'. Even fuller use was made of the writings of recent authors. There was real justification for the employment of the generic term 'Methodist' in the title, for this volume was prepared not only by the Wesleyan Methodists, but by associated Methodist Churches--the Methodist New Connexion, the Wesleyan Reform Union, and the independent Wesleyan Methodist Conferences in Ireland and Australia.

66. *The Methodist Hymn-Book* (London, 1933). With the union of the main branches of British Methodism in 1932, a new hymn-book was considered desirable. This was copyrighted in December 1933, though not actually published until the following year. The general form of the 1904 book was retained, and if in the interests of modernity the old phraseology describing 'The Christian Life' was discarded, in the interests of history John Wesley's praface was restored. The volume was greatly enriched from the collections of the other uniting bodies and by other hymns both ancient and modern. Of the total of 984 hymns 243 are credited to Charles Wesley and 25 to John. Of the 50 'Verses' appended (sometimes comprising two verses) all but 8 are by the Wesleys.

67. *Hymns Ancient and Modern* (London, 1861). In spite of strong competition, the varying editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* may be regarded as constituting the basic Anglican hymn-book during the last hundred years. Of 273 hymns in the first edition of 1861 only 9 were by Charles Wesley, 3 more being added in the Appendix of 1868. The 473 hymns in the revised and enlarged edition of 1875 contained the same 12 hymns by Charles Wesley, together with one by John Wesley. The edition of 1889, with its 'First Supplement' added an additional 10 by Charles and 2 by John. The 1904 edition included in its new selection of 643 hymns 24 by Charles Wesley and 5 by John; of these 3 by Charles and 2 by John there appeared for the first time, 2 by Charles and 1 by John of these additions being carried over into the 1916 'Second Supplement'. The 1950 revision contains among its 636 hymns 28 by Charles and 4 by John, 7 of those by Charles being here included

for the first time. In the Schools Edition of 1958 Charles Wesley is easily the best represented author, with 17 out of 266 hymns.

68. *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley; reprinted from the originals, with the last corrections of the authors; together with the poems of Charles Wesley not before published. Collected and arranged by G. Osborn, D. D.* (London, 1868-72). 13 vols. containing some 4,600 items published by the Wesleys, and a further 3,000 left in manuscript by Charles Wesley. In spite of the wording of the title-page, however, these volumes do not contain all the unpublished verse of Charles Wesley, and there are actually a number of omissions from his published verse.

APPENDIX F

Charles Wesley's Metres

The number of syllables in each line of the stanza is shown in arabic figures, and lines which do not rhyme with adjoining lines are separated from them by periods. The rhyme pattern is shown separately by the letters corresponding to the lines. X and Y are used for lines which do not rhyme with any other. The Arabic figure at the right margin refers to the first line of the hymn as it appears in Appendix A. The basic metre of the line is shown by variations in the letters, thus:

A = iambic
A = a combination of iambic and anapaestic feet
a = trochaic
a = a combination of trochaic and dactylic feet

I. IAMBIC

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
1.	8.6.8.6	ABAB	13
2.	4 4.6.8.6	AABAB	223
3.	4 4.6.4 4.6	AABCCB	156
4.	8 8.6.8 8.6	AABCCB	49
5.	8.6.8.6.8.6.8.6	ABABCDCD	71
6.	8.7.8.7	ABAB	289
7.	8.8.8.8	ABAB	6
8.	8 8.8 8	AABB	28
9.	8 8.8 8 8	AABBB	151
10.	8.8.8.8.8 8	ABABCC	1
11.	8.8.8.8.8 10	ABABCC	220
12.	8.8.8.8..0 .2	ABABCC	184
13.	8 8.8.8 8.8	AABCCB	126
14.	8 8.8.8 8.12	AABCCB	209
15.	8 8.8 8.8 8	AABBCC	106
16.	8.8.8.8.8 8 8	ABABCCC	202
17.	8.8.8.8.8.8.8.8	ABABCDCD	11
18.	8.8.8.8.8 8.8 8	ABABCCDD	164
19.	8 8.8 8.8.8.8.8	AABBCDCD	148
20.	8 8.8 8.8 8.8 8	AABBCCDD	199
21.	8 8.10 12.8 8.10 12	AABBCCDD	208
22.	8 8.8.8 8.8	AABCCB	128
23.	6.6.6.6	ABAB	153
24.	6 6.6 6.6 6	AABBCC	102
25.	6.6.6.6.8 8	ABABCC	29
26.	6 6.6 6.8 8	AABBCC	163
27.	6.6.6.6.6.6.6.6	ABABCDCD	178

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
28.	6 6.6 6.6 6.6 6	AABBCCDD	213
29.	6 6.6 6.6 6.8 8	AABBCCDD	168
30.	6.6.8.6	ABAB	204
31.	6.6.8.6.6.6.8.6	ABABCDCD	43
32.	6.6.6.6.8.6.8.6	ABABCDCD	141
33.	6.6.6.6.4 4.6.4 4.6	ABABCCDEED	136
34.	6.6.8.6.6.6.8.6	ABABCDCD	186
35.	7.6.7.6.7.6.7.6	ABABCDCD	169

II. TROCHAIC

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
1.	7.7.7.7	abab	123
2.	7 7.7 7	aabb	27
3.	7.7.7.7.7 7	ababcc	12
4.	7 7.7.7.7.7	aabcbc	167
5.	7 7.7 7.7 7	aabbcc	108
6.	7.7.7.7.7.7.7.7	ababcdcd	15
7.	7.7.7.7.7 7.7 7	ababccdd	155
8.	7 7.7 7.7 7.7 7	aabbccdd	103
9.	7 7.7 7.7 7.7 7.7 7.7 7	aabbccddeeff	7
10.	8.7.8.7.4.7	ababxb	92
11.	8.7.8.7.77	ababcc	205
12.	8.7.8.7.8.7.8.7	ababcdcd	69
13.	8.7.8.7.8 8.7 8	ababccdd	226
14.	8.3 3.6	abba	115
15.	8.3 3.6.8.3 3.6	abbacddc	66

III. TROCHAIC-DACTYLIC

Iambic verse is frequently written with reversed accents in the opening foot, thus giving what may be described as a trochee followed by an iambus. It would be possible, however, if the line stood by itself to scan it as an opening dactyl followed by trochees, and the decision must be made on the basis of the context. In only one metre does Charles Wesley appear to have sustained an opening dactylic beat, in verse which otherwise seems to be trochaic--and even here the matter is open to a different interpretation. This is the famed "Nancy Dawson" metre which Wesley adopted from a popular but far from polite ballad.

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
1.	8.7.8.7.8.7.8.7	ababcdcd	130

IV. IAMBIC-ANAPAESTIC

Charles Wesley's anapaestic verse is the least regular of all. His basic five-syllabled and eleven-syllabled lines consist of an opening iambus and one or three anapaests. Occasionally one of the anapaests may become an iambus, thus reducing the syllables by one, but much more frequently the opening iambus becomes an anapaest, thus increasing the syllables by one.

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
1.	5 5 11	AAA	50
2.	5 5 11.5 5 11	AAABBB	61
3.	5 5.5 11	AABB	42
4.	5 5.5 11.5 5.5 11	AABBCCDD	60
5.	5 5.9.5 5.9	AABCCB	117
6.	5.5.5.5.5.6.5.6.5	ABABCDCD	32

V. MIXED IAMBIC AND TROCHAIC

The metrical forms which follow are among the most characteristic contributions of Charles Wesley to English verse. There seems to have been very few major poets who used them with regularity before him, and few since. Their basic syllables per line are 8, 7, and 6. Various theories may be held about their individual origins. The "Wesleyan 7 6 metres" (No. 85, for example) can be scanned as if they were completely trochaic, with lines of 13 or 15 syllables split into two parts for the sake of a congregation's breath. On the other hand, Wesley clearly desires a pause, however slight, at the end of almost every line, and we must take it therefore that he intended these also as "mixed" metres.

No.	Syllables per line	Rhyme-pattern	Example
1.	4 4.6.7.5	AABab	137
2.	4 4.6.7.6	AABaB	138
3.	4 4.7.7.7	AABaB	182
4.	6 6.7.7.7.7	AAbcbc	4
5.	7.7.7.7.8 8	ababCC	177
6.	7 7.7 7.8 8	aabbCC	152
7.	7.8.8.8.8 12	aBABCC	279
8.	8 7.6.7 7.6	AaBCCB	181
9.	8 7.6.8.8.6	AaBCBC	125
10.	8 8.8 8.7 7	AABBcc	158
11.	7.7.7.7.7 8 8	ababcCC	154
12.	7.6.7.6.7.8.7.6	aBaBcdcD	38
13.	7.6.7.6.7.8.7.6	aBaBcDcD	53
14.	7.7.7.7.7.6.7.6	aBaBcdcd	197
15.	7 7.7 7.7 7.7 8	aabbccdD	166
16.	7 7.7 8.7 7.8 8	aabBccDD	157
17.	7 8.7 7.7 7.8 7	aAbbccDd	150

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